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ABSTRACT

This collection of papers includes the following: "The Great Debate. Proposed: TESOL is a Science, Not an Art" (David Nunan); "Argument and Entertainment: TESOL as a Science" (Elana Shohamy); "TESOL: Art and Craft" (Henry Widdowson); "An Attitude of Inquiry: TESOL as a Science" (Diane Larsen-Freeman); "Precision, Elegance and Simplicity: Perspectives on TESOL and Art" (G. Richard Tucker); "Can I Love You? A Child's Adventure with Puppets and Play" (George Dempsie); "Magical Boxes: A Window to the Imagination" (Lora Friedman and Linda Simone); "Evolving Texts: My Students and My Writings" (Cesar Valmana Iribarren); "The Alternative Textbook and Teaching English in Ukraine" (Olga Kulchytska); "ESL Storytellers as Cultural Diplomats" (Kim Hughes Wilhelm); "Talking about the Arts in Writing Class" (Gabriel Yardley); "Story Grammars and Oral Fluency" (Dafne Gonzalez); "Student-Written Tests: An Effective Twist in Teaching Language" (Lionel M. Kaufman, Jr.); "Jargon Cells: Integrating Grammar and Lexis through Topical Focus" (Judy Hartt); "An ESL-TESL Drop-In Center that Works" (Connie Mitchell and Christine Mueller); "Junk Mail Catalogs: A Treasure-Trove for Language Teachers" (Susan L. Schwartz); and "Thirty Notes on Writing for This Journal" (Clyde Coreil). (Papers contain references.) (SM)

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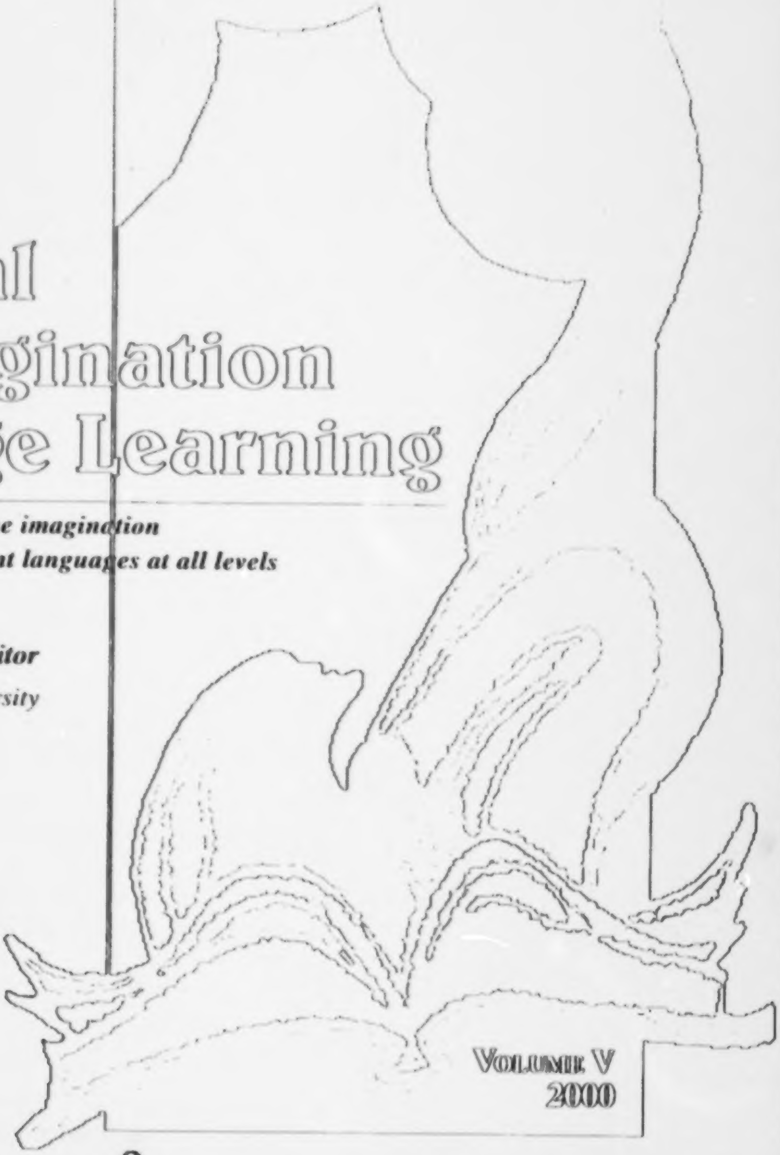
The Journal Of the Imagination In Language Learning

A publication dedicated to the role of the imagination in the acquisition of first and subsequent languages at all levels

Clyde Coreil, *Editor*
New Jersey City University



Volume V
2000

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The *Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning* is published annually by the Center for the Imagination in Language Learning at the New Jersey City University. (Web site: www.njcu.edu./cill/cill.htm; e-mail: cill@njcu.edu) The annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning is sponsored by the Center every April. Although the sessions at that meeting take up the same issues, the *Journal* selects and publishes articles independently of the Conference. Articles from this publication are abstracted in *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts and in Sociological Abstracts*.

This *Journal* is concerned with the following proposition: Attempts to acquire a language are significantly enhanced by the presence of an activated imagination. Both theoretical and practical articles or proposals for articles that are related to this broad area are welcome and should be addressed to Dr. Clyde Coreil, Editor; *The Journal of the Imagination*; Hepburn Hall, Room 111; New Jersey City University; Jersey City, New Jersey, USA 07305-1597. Dr. Coreil can be reached at telephone: 201-200-3087; voice mail 201-200-3237. E-mail: rcoreil@njcu.edu. and coreil@erols.com. Dr. Donna Farina, Assistant Editor, is at Telephone: 201-200-3176. E-mail dfarina@njcu.edu. The FAX number for the *Journal* is 201-200-3238. In the near future, all issues more than two years old will be available in their entirety at no charge on our internet site.

The major illustrations for Volume V were drawn by Max Sanchez, an Art major at the University. The cover and incidental drawings are by Kalliroi Antoniou, an alumnus. The editors wish to express appreciation to Mr. Ronald Bogusz, Director of the Office of Publications and Special Programs at New Jersey City University, who has designed all issues.

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The Journal Of the Imagination In Language Learning

A publication dedicated to the role of the imagination in the acquisition of first and subsequent languages at all levels

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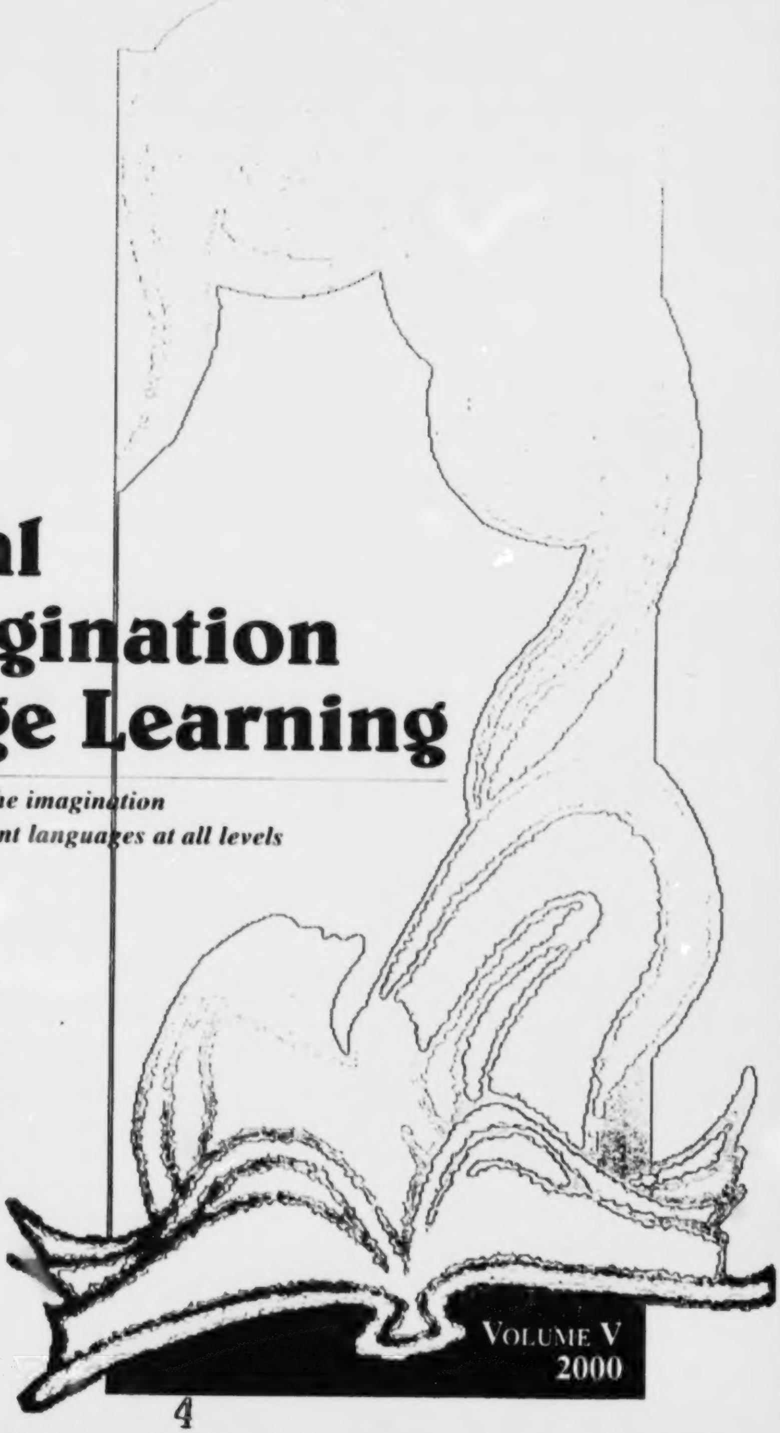

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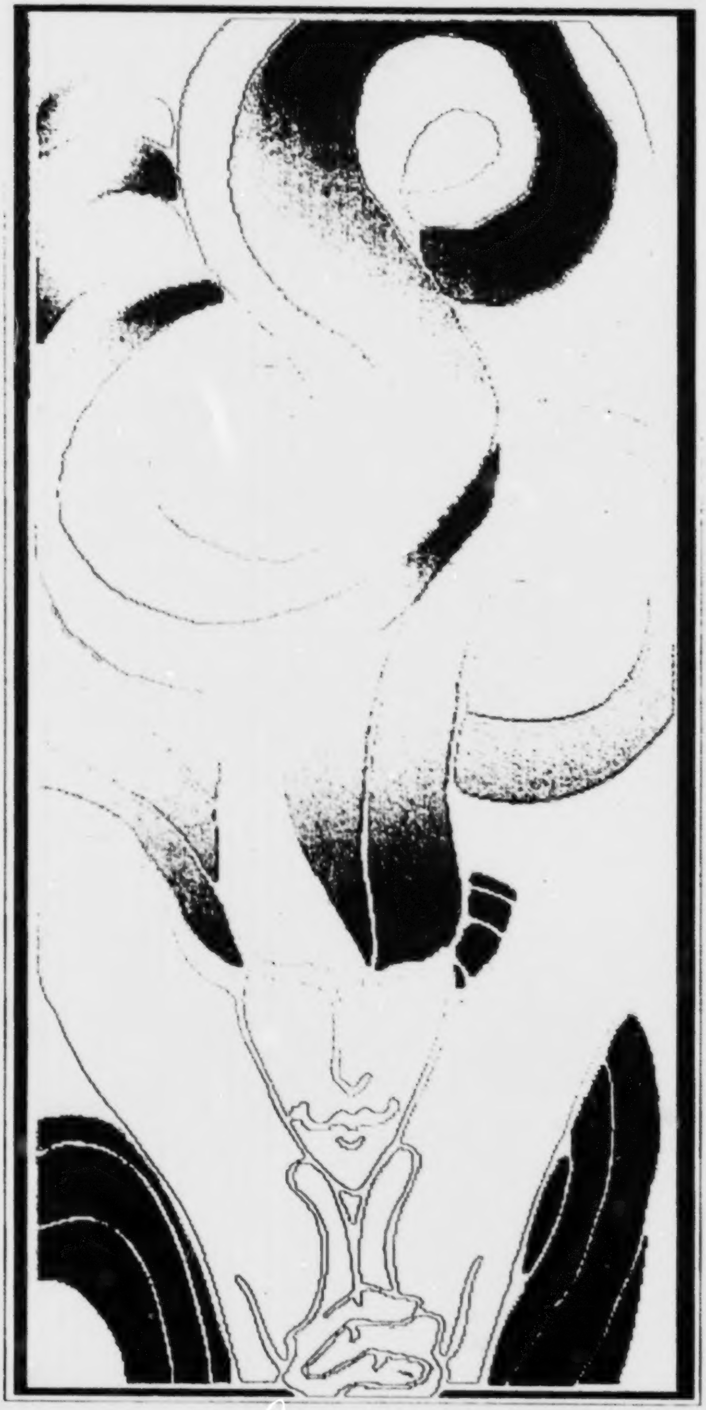

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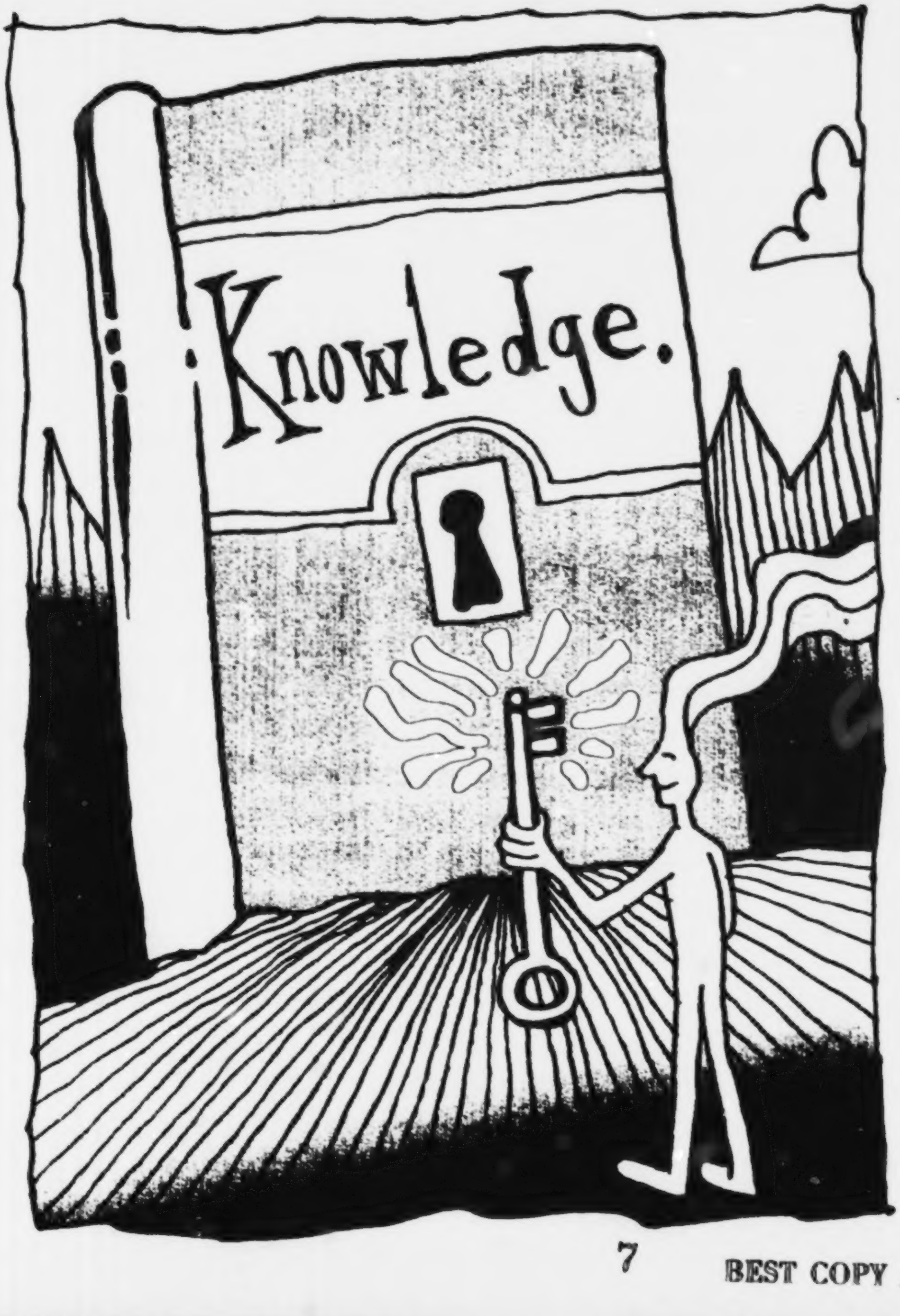

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Introduction

There is a certain fullness and balance that editors sometimes sense about a collection as it comes together. Although certain articles can be held or rejected and others sought, the final shape of the whole is largely a matter of chance–or in our case here, good fortune. I have no idea if this will come across to you, the reader, but I have had that distinct feeling about this issue. I suppose that the key moment of precipitating confidence was when I opened a packet from Hong Kong to find "The Great Debate." In essence, this is a collection of writings by five of the most talented and productive minds in language teaching, all focusing on one issue: Is TESOL best conceived as science or as art? We are pleased to present this piece for the first time in print as a series of lead articles.

My interest had been piqued in 1996 when I first read about the Debate, due to take place at the annual TESOL convention in Baltimore later that year. I attended the Debate, found it to be a truly memorable defining moment, and expressed to David Nunan my interest in publishing it. He said he was pleased but had to check several things out. By the time the transcript arrived, I had just about given up on it. I read it immediately, discussed it with the staff, and e-mailed acceptance a few days later. I would like to express my deep appreciation to David, to Elana Shohamy, Henry Widdowson, Diane Larsen-Freeman and Richard Tucker for their cooperation in subsequent correspondence. I have always maintained that the most accomplished folks are the most gracious. With these debaters, my home-made proverb does indeed hold true.

Eminence Grise

All this is certainly not to say that our lesser known writers have been eclipsed. The compelling narrative about Shazana, a withdrawn first-grader who responded to George Dempsie's puppets, is among my all-time favorite articles. The pieces by Susan Schwartz on using junk mail in the classroom, and by Lionel Kaufman on students writing their own quizzes had been ready for last year's *Journal*. However, book designer Ronald Bogusz said that we had too much copy and that these two articles were the perfect length to be cut. The argument was strong, and our designer has been called the "Eminence Grise"—I believe that an accurate translation would be "The Gray and Powerful Presence." Wise editors respect designers like wise gamblers respect bookies. So, rather than attempt surgery on other articles, I agreed to hold Schwartz and Kaufman until this issue.

A delightful piece on "Magical Boxes" was written by Lora Friedman and Linda Simone who encourage teachers to allow children the freedom to realize their imaginations. Kim Wilhelm and Dafne Gonzalez have short but infectious articles on, respectively, adult ESL learners who tell stories in elementary schools, and on teachers being taught to use story grammars. Gabriel Yardley maintains that transition words should be internalized for speaking in order to improve writing about art. Cesar Valmaña Iribarren describes the use of his own creative writing with his students, and Olga Kulchytska cites the advantages of students developing their own contemporary textbooks. Connie Mitchell and Christine Mueller outline a functioning "Drop-In Center" that is run by the undergraduate ESL Program in cooperation with the graduate program for teachers of ESL. As far as we know, such cooperation is unfortunately rare in the USA. Judy Hartt advocates the trading of breadth and scope for depth and richness in the particular approach she describes. I close with "Thirty Notes on Writing for This *Journal*," which I hope will get you to write and submit that article you have been thinking about for so long.

International Representation

Part of the variety in contents comes from a deliberate attempt to publish articles from different parts of the world. Represented in this issue are Cuba, Ukraine, Venezuela, Japan and China, as well as the South, Midwest and Northeast USA. At the other end of the process, we make an equally determined attempt to send at least two complimentary copies of the *Journal* to schools and professionals in every country in the world. Nothing makes us happier than to hear from you in cards and letters. It all constitutes a Grand Dialogue, and we sincerely appreciate it.

A New Member of the Staff

Dr. Donna Farina has joined our staff as assistant editor. One of the first projects for which she volunteered (in addition, of course, to a generous load of editing) was the construction of a web page for the Center for the Imagination in Language Learning, which houses the *Journal* and several other activities. Thanks to her, it's up and running and can be accessed at <www.njcu.edu/cill/cill.htm>. Our name has been changed from Jersey City State College to New Jersey City University, but the campus remains as charming and welcoming as ever. We invite you to test the waters at the Tenth Annual Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning on Friday, April 14, 2000. There will be a keynote speaker, approximately 18 workshops, lots of publishers, coffee and donuts—all for a virtually nominal fee of $15. We're across the river from New York City, where everyone has friends. So come on down and let us meet you.

Clyde Coreil, Editor

Editors Clyde Coreil, Donna Farina (center) and Mihri Napoliello discuss a submitted article.

Board of Editorial Advisors

We are pleased to announce that an official Board of Editorial Advisors has been formed to help bring the most accomplished as well as the most promising scholars and professionals to our pages. We are indeed grateful to the members of the Board whose experience and expertise in their various fields will enrich *The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*.

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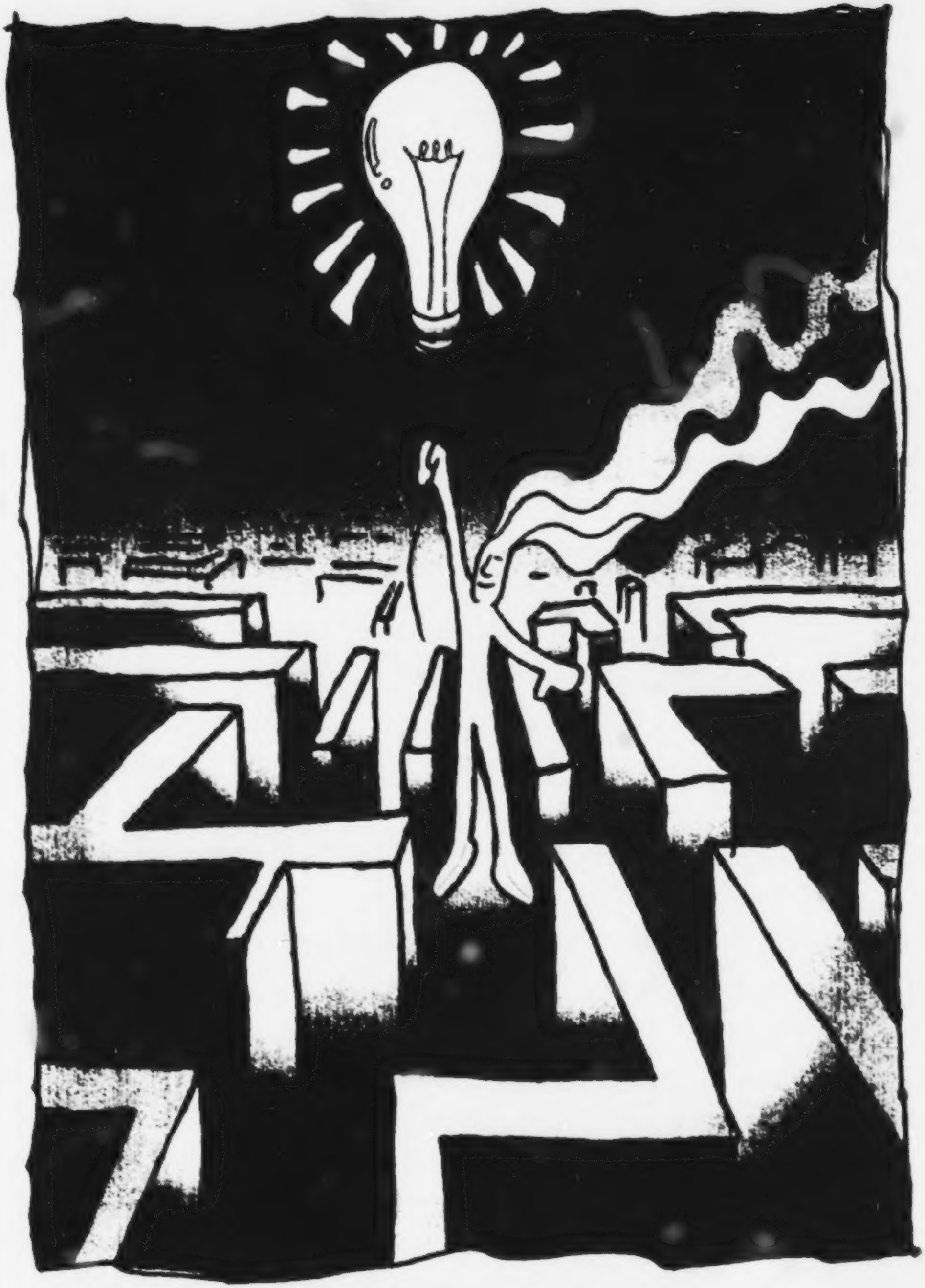

The Great Debate

Proposed: TESOL is a science, not an art

David Nunan is President of TESOL, Professor of Applied Linguistics and Director of the English Centre at the University of Hong Kong. He has written over fifty books and articles on second language curriculum development, classroom oriented research and task-based learning. His recent publications by Cambridge University Press include (with Kathleen M. Bailey) Voices from the Language Classroom; Qualitative Research in Second Language Education; *and (with Clarice Lamb)* The Self-Directed Teacher. *Nunan's four-level* ATLAS-Learning-Centered Communication *was published by Heinle & Heinle/ International Thomson Publishing, and his three-level series* Listen In, *by International Thomson Publishing.*

Moderated by David Nunan

Arguments and Comments by
Elana Shohamy Henry Widdowson
Diane Larsen-Freeman G. Richard Tucker

Editor's Note: *The path of the word from the writer's hand to the printed page is sometimes circuitous and unexpected in its twists and turns. Such was the case with this Great Debate held at the 1996 TESOL Convention. The ideas presented are rich, reflective, and still most timely. It is important that they be made available to as wide an audience as possible, and we are delighted that they should appear here for the first time in print. In the debate, all of the five participants were members of a panel and spoke in turn, mainly from prepared papers. The words of each speaker are presented as independent parts of the record of a single event.*

During the 1995 TESOL Convention in Long Beach, when it was announced that the theme of the 1996 TESOL Convention was to be "The Art of TESOL," several of my fellow Board members objected that "TESOL is a science, not an art." An animated discussion ensued. It seemed to me at the time that the internal debate should become a public one. I put it to Nick Collins, the Convention Chair, and he and his committee readily agreed.

This is not the first time that educators have debated the relative contributions to pedagogy of science versus art. Rorty (1982) argues that the art versus science debate is one between those who think of themselves as caught in time, as an evanescent moment in a continuing conversation, and those who hope to add a pebble from Newton's beach to an enduring structure.

There are others who have staked out very firm positions. Jordan and Purves (1994), for example, argues that "I can think of only a handful of studies that have added substantively to our knowledge of learning and teaching, yet the researchers grind on, adding filigrees to what knowledge we have. We have innumerable studies pointing to the characteristics, successes, and failures of individual schools, classrooms, teachers, and students…We have countless experimental studies that contrast undescribed, and therefore irreplacable treatments of students." On the other hand, "We need only turn to documents like *A Nation at Risk* (1993) with its barrage of military metaphors, its scant documentation, and its many unwarranted conclusions to see the potential abuse inherent in a totally art-based form of inquiry with no clear commitment to a set of scientific or ethical standards." And one final quote, this time from Hatch (1994) "In art the emphasis is on how and what is expressed. In teaching, it has to be placed on what is learned, not just what is expressed. What's art got to do with it? What does it matter? What matters is advancing the debate about what students are learning, and rich and articulate representations of educational activities–whether we call them research, criticism, or art–can do that."

In this paper, four of the most distinguished names in our field present their own perspective on the relative contributions of science and art to the field of TESOL.

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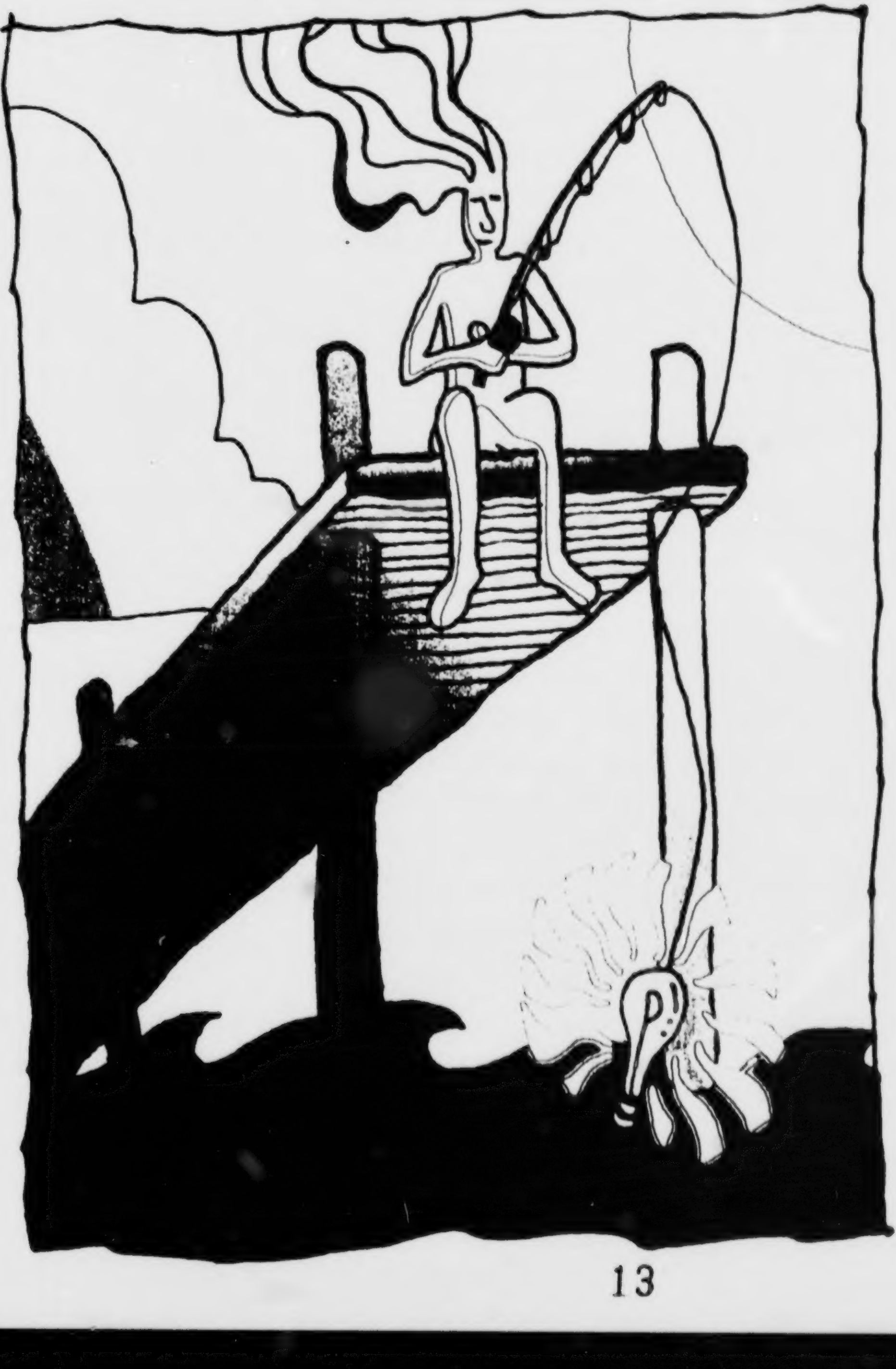

Argument and Entertainment: TESOL as Science

Dr. Elana Shohamy is Professor of Second Language Education and Chair of Graduate Programs at Tel Aviv University. Her areas of interest include language testing and assessment, and language policy and planning. She is currently co-director, with Bernard Spolsky, of the Language Policy Research Centre. She has written numerous articles, and her book on research methods in second language research, which she co-authored with Herbert Seliger, is a standard work in the field.

Elana Shohamy

MINIMAL PAIRS:

Love—Friendship
Work—Home
Wealth—Happiness
Beauty—Intellect

Competence—Performance
Accuracy—Fluency
BICS—CALP
Use—Usage

Science–Art?

A long time ago I realized that those dichotomies, or minimal pairs of the communicative era, are just exercises in entertainment. How naive can one be to believe that there is one correct answer, one solution, to whether a given factor is due to heritage or environment? To sense or sensibility?

And why would anyone think that such loaded and complex concepts represent a dichotomy, where one is identified as existing at the expense of the other. Additionally, one is forced to ask why only "two"? Perhaps there are "three," or even "four" related or contrasting concepts. As language teachers, we know that whenever we pull out a minimal pair–such as "Some say that...others say that..."—we are guaranteed to have our students speak passionately, excitingly, and enthusiastically.

Traditional Views of Art and Science

"Can you argue that TESOL is science?" So asked David Nunan in a fax from Hong Kong, or from wherever he happened to be on May 9 of 1995. David certainly knew that this minimal pair is complex and unsolvable, but he also knew that it would get us to talk passionately, excitingly and enthusiastically. And so we have.

Traditionally, science and art represented a dichotomy: society introduced strict boundaries between the two as it considered them to be different cultures, different ways of relating to the world. Eisner (1991) separated science and art into discrete entities:

> *Science was perceived as the systematic pursuit of knowledge, while art was a pleasurable form of experience.*
>
> *Science deals with data; art with imagination and personal expression.*
>
> *Science provides insight and understanding; art provides satisfaction.*
>
> *Science seeks the truth; art creates fictions in the form of literature, poetry, songs, and plays.*
>
> *Science is cognitive; art is affective.*
>
> *Science is replicative; art is personal and unique.*

Society further enforced these differences as universities were organized into faculties of science and faculties of art. One deals with hard data; the other with imagination, personal expression, taste and sensibility. Scientists guarded themselves from art as they viewed it as undermining scientific objectivity by introducing subjectivity.[1]

Scientific Motivations and Art

Yet, science and art share similar features. From Renaissance art to 20th century painting, music, theatre and poetry, science was always an integral part of art. Leonardo de Vinci utilized scientific methodologies of measurements, experimentation, engineering, and analysis for creating his art. In an exhibition currently showing at the Guggenheim Museum in New York entitled: "Abstract Art: Risk, Freedom and Discipline," it is demonstrated how abstract artists employ highly calculated methods as they make use of principles and materials to communicate with the viewer. The point is that for them, freedom and discipline are ultimately inseparable.

My colleague Yosi Yisraeli, a well known playwright in Israel, shared with me a careful observation. "In writing my plays," Yosi said, "I am constantly incorporating devices that will make my audience sit on the edge of their chairs." It is a process, he was pointing out, by which a number of independent variables are expected to affect a dependent variable.

"Spontaneity? It takes years and years of perfecting technical skills before spontaneity can ever be reached," Yosi added.

Artistic Motivations and Science

Science, as well, is motivated by artistic modes which are integrated in all phases of the research—in the enthusiasm of selecting a research topic, in the creativity of constructing data collection instruments, in the imagination of preparing research materials, in the sensibility of collecting data, in the taste of making decisions about materials to be included, in the expressiveness of drawing patterns and themes in data, in the exhilaration experienced when obtaining research results, in the excitement of interpreting results, and in the aesthetics and beauty that scientists experience in observing the final products of their research.

As my friend A. Kurgalansky, a leading social psychologist puts it: "Whenever I complete a successful research study, I view it as if I created a beautiful piece of art. It is like antique furniture where attention is paid to each detail, to every line. And the product is a work of art.'"

TESOL is both Science and Art

What is TESOL? TESOL consists of both science and art. The science part of TESOL refers to the rich body of knowledge that underlies its practice and that provides answers to many questions about students' language learning, teaching methods, measurement of language, etc. This knowledge draws upon related disciplines such as applied linguistics, literacy, sociology, psychology and pedagogy. It was arrived at through a scientific process of disciplined inquiry whereby questions are asked, theories are developed, refuted and reconstructed, phenomenon are observed, data are collected, and conclusions are reached. TESOL, thus, is a dynamic science that continuously seeks new knowledge, publishes respected journals and organizes conferences where this knowledge is being disseminated. The members of TESOL–teachers, materials and curriculum developers, testers, policy makers, and researchers–are very fortunate to have this scientific knowledge to rely on, to refer to, to be navigated by.

The art component of TESOL refers to the creativity, enthusiasm, imagination, aesthetics, and intuitions incorporated in the teaching of English. The integration of art into TESOL can be demonstrated in the many sessions of this convention, and in the new *publication The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning*, where attention is paid to language experiences, music, storytelling, reading for pleasure, creativity, and imagination, aesthetics, and the feeling for rightness—all creative avenues for generating new possibilities. Thus, both art and science are needed for TESOL: each has a unique contribution to make to the quality of TESOL. It is not a dichotomy, not an "either-or" choice. The omission of either one can have a negative effect on the quality of TESOL.

Science Begins to Lag Behind

Yet, while both science and art are essential for the quality of TESOL the scientific component in TESOL has been drastically decreasing in the past decade. In this year's convention program, only 50 out of 1,000 slots are devoted to research, i.e., 5%. Abandoning the scientific component of TESOL may have serious consequences to the quality of TESOL because it means that the practice of TESOL may be based on authorities, beliefs, prejudices, hunches, intuitions, taste, and a priori knowledge with no ways of proving, disproving, substantiating or validating such claims. TESOL, being an organization that serves society, has the obligation and commitment to perform its mission–the teaching of English–in the most effective way. It is a high stake which means that it needs to continuously examine itself, ask questions and validate procedures regarding the quality and effectiveness of its outcomes. Science is the only method through which this task can be accomplished. Through science the validity of authorities, beliefs, prior knowledge, and intuitions can be validated by observations, experimentation and interactions with the real world, by systematically examining questions, collecting actual evidence, externalising and opening data to a system of checks and balance. This substantiated information about effective ways of acquiring, teaching, and learning languages is needed as a basis for change, modifications, adaptation and challenge.

"Action without understanding is blind and can be destructive" (McNamara, 1996). While many elements of art can be incorporated in this process, there is no way that art, per se, can fulfill this mission. Any claim that it does so, needs to be substantiated. Turning to art as the only way to improve TESOL and dropping science is a dangerous illusion.

New Definition of "Science"

Yet, science, in its traditional form, has gone through criticism and resentment by practitioners for being irrelevant and complex. Its results, many say, are not applicable to contexts different than those of the research. This criticism, though, relates to a now outdated view of science and not to the approach currently held, which is more appropriate for the TESOL reality. While the positivist view of science included standardization, replication, and objectivity, it is now perceived as a limited way of understanding the world. The new paradigm, an interpretative one, originates in the realization that the contexts of social science vary from one situation to another, and are dynamic and fluid. It is socially and culturally constructed and represented by various means and forms—numerical, verbal, qualitative, and quantitative.

Science no longer needs to be guarded from "foreign elements" as these are viewed as enriching it. It continues to seek truth, but it is realized that there is no *single* truth but multiple truths, multiple sources of knowledge, determined by interpretative communities. The goals are not to find consistency, to prove, to disprove, and to predict. Rather, the goals are to interpret, understand and gain insights into specific contexts as exemplified between the researcher and that which is researched, often in a form of a dialogue. This type of research is conducted not only by the so-called "scientists," but by all involved in the practice of TESOL—as they all have the commitment for gaining knowledge for the sake of improving its quality. This form of research does not imply anarchy, but rather principles that are constrained, and that constitute a disciplined basis for observations, investigation and action.

Defining the Problem

Although science cannot guarantee reaching all truths, the continuous pursuit of truth is preferable to the alternative (Shohamy, D. 1996). If we choose this direction of science, we will be in line with what a prominent scholar said not too long ago: "The value of research is that it can help teachers to define more clearly the problems that they themselves must solve. What it can do is to stimulate interest and encourage teachers to think about the implications of their practices. It can also provide them with a conceptual context within which to work, in the form of hypotheses to test out in the conditions of their particular classrooms. In short, theory can help practitioners to adopt a theoretical orientation to their task, whereby they seek to refer the particular techniques they use to more general principles, and, reciprocally, test out the validity of such principles against the observed actualities of classroom practice" (Widdowson 1990, 25-26).

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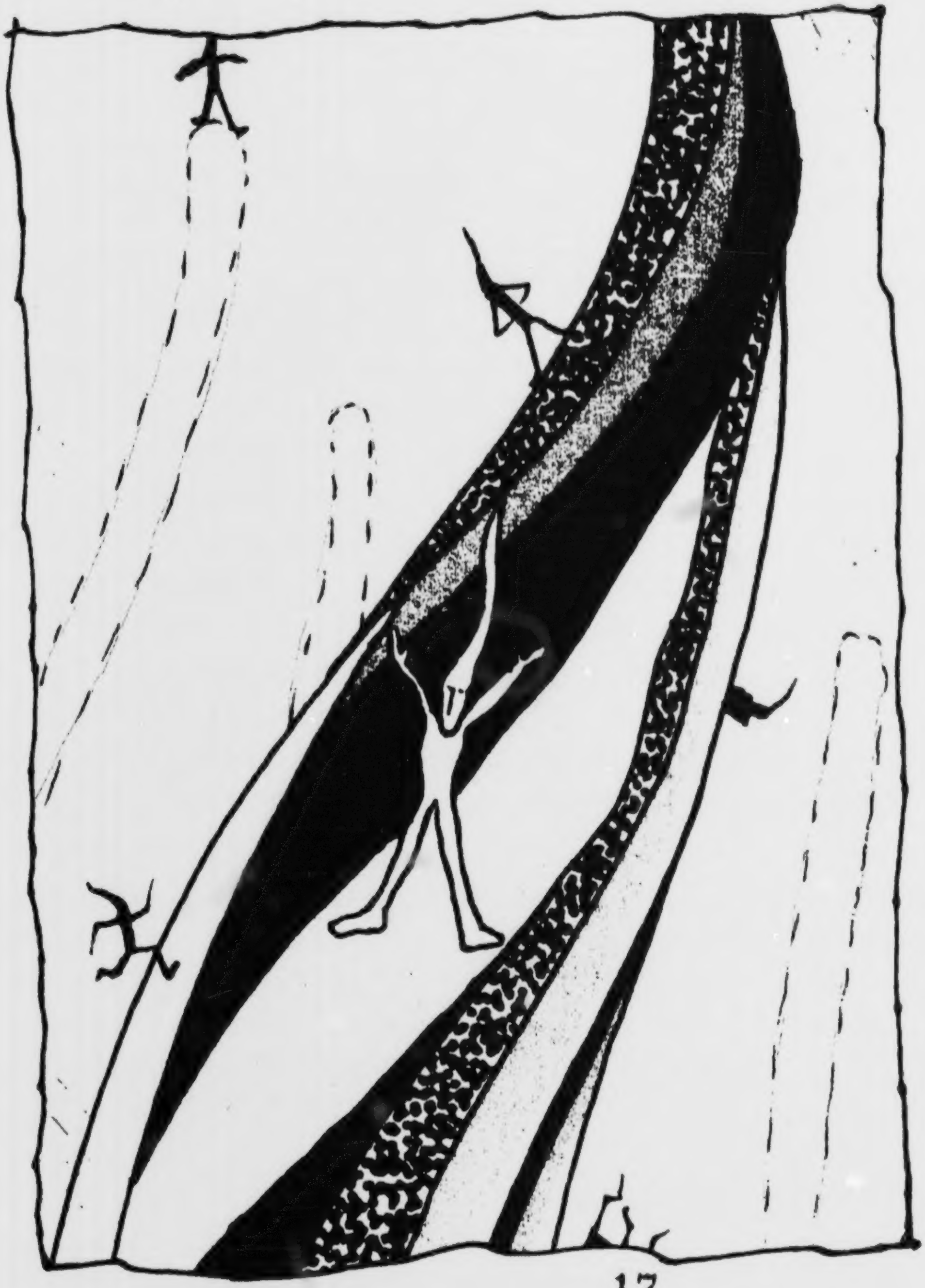


TESOL: Art and Craft

Henry Widdowson

Science is seductive because it seems to tell us the way things really are, in spite of what they seem to be. It gets rid of what is incidental and reveals the essential, sees through the symptoms and gets at the real cause of things, the general laws underlying the variety of actual appearances. It is an impressive performance. And you can indeed see it as a performance: like that of a stage magician performing tricks that show the admiring audience how wrong they are to trust the evidence of their own eyes. You saw the gentleman's watch smashed to pieces with my hammer, but you were wrong. Hey presto! Here it is intact. Round of applause. The hundred dollar bill was burned to ash, but abracadabra! Wrong again. Appearances are deceptive.

But there is more to science than conjuring tricks, you will say. It does not deliberately set out to create illusions but to dispel them: it does not conceal causes, but reveals them. It explains reality. The earth really does go round the sun. The illusion is to suppose otherwise. That may be so but whose reality are we talking about? Science necessarily undermines our trust in experience. The world of the senses and common sense turns out to be insecure, a kind of fiction of appearances. But it is real for us. Science may prove that the earth goes round the sun, but not in my experience. The sun rises and sets: sunup, sundown. Why should I be so persistent in the error of my ways? Now that I know what really happens, why do I not alter my attitudes accordingly so that they are consistent with the way things really are'?

Dr. Henry Widdowson previously held chairs at the University of London and the University of Essex, and is now Professor at the University of Vienna. He began his career with the British Council, working in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, before talking up an academic career in Edinburgh where he obtained his doctorate in 1973. He has published many books and articles, the most recent of which are Aspects of Language Teaching, Practical Stylistic, *and* Linguistics, *the first in a new series of which he is editor,* Oxford Introductions to Language Study. *All are published by Oxford University Press.*

Elusive Variables

The answer is because what science reveals is not the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth so that everything else is illusion, and needs to be corrected. It reveals a version of reality. It is an impressive version. For one thing, it is objective, supported by empirical proof, and predictable. If you do this, whoever you are, this will happen in consequence. And if you do it again, the same thing will happen again. Always. But only under certain conditions, and here's the rub. You have to control the circumstances, ignore a whole host of factors, eliminate them from consideration. The scientific version of reality is an abstraction. So in our own field, research in Second Language Acquisition can claim to be scientific. As such, its findings are conditional on controls, on eliminating unwanted variables, so that they are a version of learning, valid only under these conditions. But this abstracted analysis does not match up with actual experience, where variables cannot be so conveniently eliminated. This is not to say that this scientific version may not reveal things which have potential relevance, but the relevance has to be established by reference to the reality of actual experience. It is never self-evident. So researchers in SLA can never reveal the truth about language learning, and never tell teachers how to teach. The problem is that some of them seem to claim that they can, and some TESOL practitioners are deluded into believing them.

The point is then that science is an abstract enquiry that sees *through* things as we know them to investigate the hidden and undercurrent laws and rules and regularities that we are not aware of. But things as we know them are what we have to live with. We cannot live with abstractions. So somehow we have to relate them back to the reality we know and, make them concrete again. How do we do this?

TESOL cannot be a science because it's a domain of practical activity not of abstract enquiry. But it can be *informed* by science. Practice has to make reference to theory. But then theory has to have relevance to practice. This, in our field, is what applied linguistics means. How then is science applied?

A Model for the Application of Science to TESOL

We know how it is applied in other practical domains. It is done by a process called *technology*. Once science has discovered the essential forces and causes that underlie familiar phenomena, technology can ma-nipulate them to produce new phenomena and so change the world in which we actually live. Science explains. Technology exploits. So science explains reality in terms of relativity, quantum mechanics, thermodynamics and electromagnetism. And technology exploits the explanation by turning the findings into products: the television, the computer, the compact disc, the nuclear bomb. And so we arrive at civilization as we know it. Here, then, we have a model for the application of science. So what similar applications can we find in our field? What is the equivalent in TESOL of the TV or the Teflon frypan? If physical laws can be manipulated to produce the microwave oven for speeding up the cooking process, why can the laws of learning that SLA reveal not be used to produce devices for speeding up the language learning process? Why does the science of linguistic enquiry not have a technology of TESOL to go with it?

There have been attempts to make TESOL into a technology. There was a time when teachers were told that it was scientifically established that language was reducible to formal structures and that learning it was a matter of habit formation induced by repetition, and the result was a technology of pattern practice and structural drill. More recently, they have been told that scientific enquiry has revealed that elements of language are naturally learned in a certain order, and there have been serious proposals that there should be a corresponding technology of syllabus design which applies that order. But the problem is that technology is necessarily manipulation: it makes findings into products and gets its results by intervention, by moulding things into shape, imposing a pattern on them. What technology does is to cast reality in a new image: its products are reproductions of scientific findings in a different form.

Now you have to be pretty sure that the findings are valid before you start applying them. In TESOL, we cannot always be. Much research is conceptually flawed in its own terms and its findings questionable. And you also have to be pretty sure that the product is what you want. TESOL is concerned with human beings. In certain respects they are all alike: bodies come in all shapes and sizes, but they all consist of the same internal organs, so medical technology can be effectively and predictably applied. Human brains are basically the same whatever head they are in. Human minds are not, and this in many ways is inconvenient. So you can try to make them the same by making them conform to findings, and in effect operating on them as if pedagogy were a kind of brain surgery or genetic engineering. This is a chilling prospect. But luckily there is an alternative.

The Process We Call Art

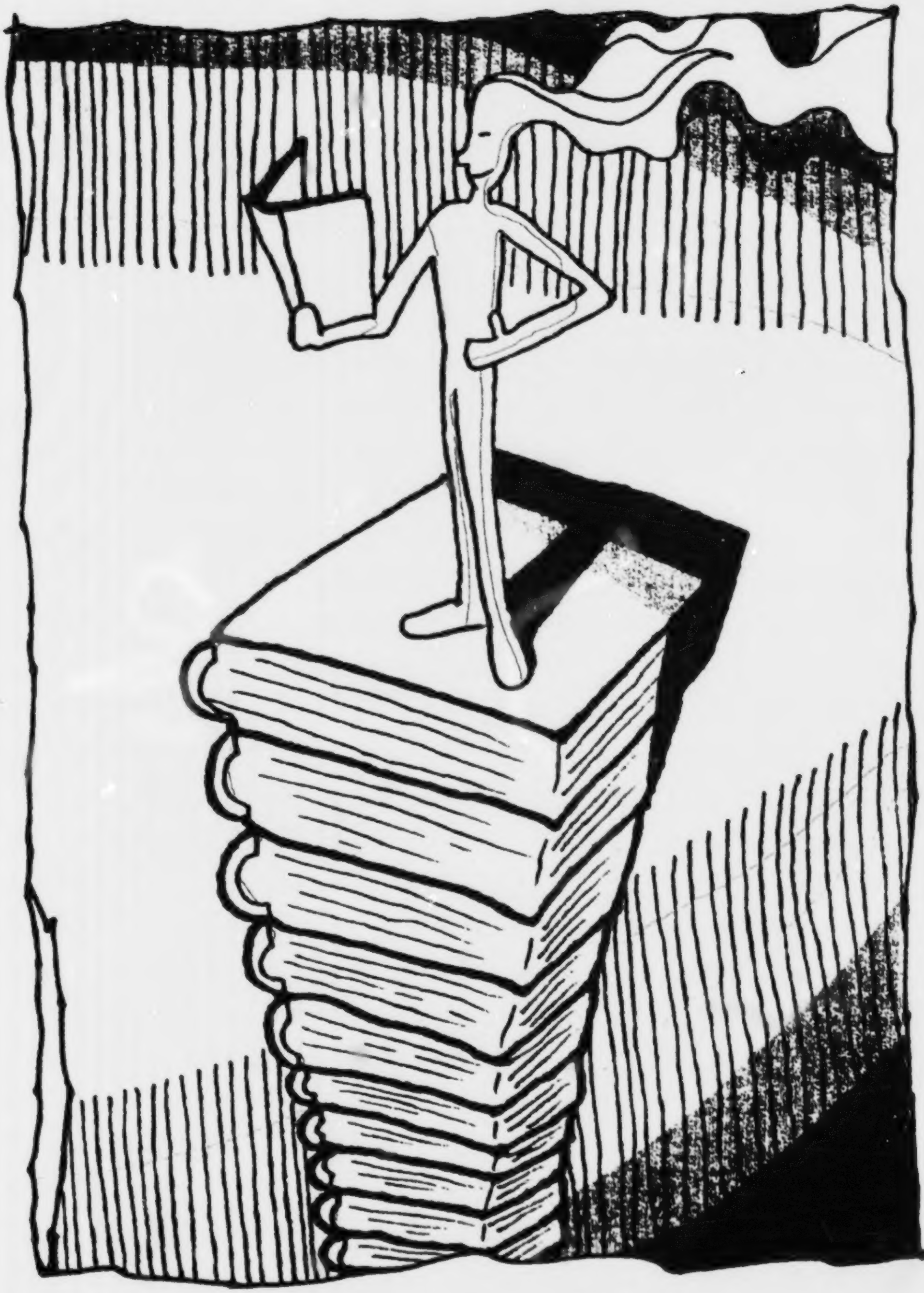
One way of making science relevant is by technology. Another is to consider the general principles that arise from theoretical enquiry and treat them as parameters which can be variously set to suit different sets of circumstances. In this case it is not the findings that are relevant but the ideas which they are supposed to prove. You do not assume relevance and validity in advance: you establish them by referring them to your own circumstances. The validity of these ideas is their relevance. If they are not relevant, they are not valid. The everyday world of immediate experience is not discounted in this case but given equal weight. This enables you to design reality in a variety of forms. You are informed by ideas but you do not conform to them. This process is not technology, it is *craft*, and the successful individual application of this process is what we call art.

So TESOL practitioners, I suggest, are, as individuals in the particular circumstances of their own classrooms, acting as artists in the exercise of their craft. They are not scientists seeking to eliminate variety in the interests of establishing generalities. They are not technologists seeking to exploit the findings of science by manipulation. As artists, they react to variety and give shape and meaning to it, and they do so by reference to the principles of their craft. But notice that to talk of TESOL as art does not mean that it is simply a matter of untrammelled individual creativity, that teachers are born not made and that's that. Artists are made by knowing about their craft, and so are teachers. Leonardo da Vinci did not become an artist at birth and neither did David Nunan. Of course some artists are better than others. But even those with instinctive gifts need to have them informed by a conscious awareness of the principles, the theoretical principles, of their craft.

To modify lines of Alexander Pope:

> *True ease in teaching comes from art not chance.*
> *As those move easiest who have learned to dance.*

We cannot all dance as artistically as Fred Astaire, but even he had to learn how. We can all learn the craft of dancing and teaching, and become artists in our own right. We might even try doing the two at the same time. Now that really would be an art.



An Attitude of Inquiry: TESOL as a Science

Diane Larsen-Freeman, Professor of Applied Linguistics at the School for International Training, has published some of the most popular and widely cited works in our field including Discourse Analysis in Second Language Research, The Grammar Book *(with Marianne Celce-Murcia)*, Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching, *and* An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research *(with Mike Long). She is also series editor of the highly acclaimed ESL Series* Grammar Dimensions *published by Heinle & Heinle.*

Diane Larsen-Freeman

It is fitting that I have been asked to speak to the issue of teaching as a science on the last day of a convention that has adopted as its theme, "The Art of TESOL." It is fitting for the simple reason that for as long as I have been involved in the field, my most consistent message has been one of the need to strive for balance–to avoid extremes. And so, once again, I find myself working to restore the equilibrium by arguing the case for science. I must say before doing so, however, that the art/science distinction is in fact a false dichotomy. It is clearly not a case of *either/or* but rather *both/and*. Nevertheless, as this debate format is useful for laying out the issues, let me put forward the case for the science of TESOL.

When I spoke with others about my assigned role in this debate, their initial response was often one I can only describe as sympathetic. "Good luck!" they said, but I knew that they were thinking—"Better you than me." Needless to say, this reaction did not inspire confidence. It also left me wondering why people felt this way. But rather than speculating on the reason, I decided to be a good scientist and to investigate the matter empirically. I went back to those who had wished me good fortune, and I asked them to freely associate with the word "science." Although their answers were diverse, certain associations were more frequent than others: "objective," "analytical," "sterile," "predicting and controlling," "omniscient," "arrogant," "absolute," "dispassionate." It was not difficult to see why I had been wished "Good luck" in making the case for teaching as science.

The Voices of Scientists

But are these associations really what science is all about? I think not. However, again it would not be practicing what I preach if I just asked you to take my word for it. So I will play the role of a scientist and let the evidence speak for itself. Listen to voices of scientists as they talk about what it is they do.

One day last month (February 7, 1996), Charles Gibson, host of the television show "Good Morning America," was interviewing Michael Guillen, the show's Science Editor, about a chemist who had invented "beads" that interact with sea water to generate power, 100 times the power it takes to heat them. The following is my reconstruction of part of the interview:

> *Gibson: So you get a tremendous amount of output for a little input. How does it work?*
>
> *Guillen: No one knows but different people have repeated the procedure numerous times and they always get the same result.*
>
> *Gibson: (incredulous) You mean it is a mystery? But you are a scientist!*
>
> *Guillen: Actually, it is common for scientists to observe something and for its cause to remain a mystery—for them to know absolutely nothing about why it occurred. Science deals with mystery.*

Now listen to what another scientist writes about mystery.

> *As a scientist in the Age of Reason, I delight in solving mysteries. To have a full-blown taste for mystery, however, one must take delight both in solving mysteries and in not solving them; in finding explanations for things and in living with things for which there currently is no explanation and which may be forever beyond explanation.* (Peck, 1995: 53-54).

So rather than omniscience and absolutes and arrogance, science is about mysteries and seeking explanations and acceptance–accepting that not all mysteries will yield their secrets. But what about prediction and control? Listen now to John Holland, a computer scientist, discuss these matters with regards to meteorology. (What better scientific speciality than meterology to talk humbly about prediction?)

> *The weather never settles down. It never repeats itself exactly. It's essentially unpredictable more than a week or so in advance. And yet we can comprehend and explain almost everything that we see up there. We can identify important features such as weather fronts, jet streams, and high-pressure systems. We can understand their dynamics. We can understand how they interact to produce weather on a local and regional scale. In short, we have a real science of weather–without full prediction. And we can do it because prediction isn't the essence of science. The essence is comprehension and explanation.* (Holland in Waldrop 1992: 255).

John Holland himself is concerned with complex adaptive systems. Scientists who study such systems, under the rubric of chaos/complexity science, make no pretense at being able to predict anything. The systems they study are too complex to allow for any reliable forecasting. Chaos/complexity science has also shown that reductionist thinking, which has been the most powerful tool in the "hard" sciences for the past 400 years, is inadequate for dealing with the dynamics of complex, nonlinear systems (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). Thus, "the most important way of knowing today [in modern science] is the one that can respect complexity while examining it" (Gattegno 1987: 80).

Finally, I submit evidence from an entomologist.[1] Last month, on the U.S. National Public Radio show "Weekend Edition," an entomologist from Montana State University in Bozeman (while discussing beetles) made the comment that there was more insect diversity–more species–in Glacier National Park than in the tropics. When Alex Chadwick, the NPR commentator, asked why this was so, the entomologist responded, "We don't know." Alex Chadwick replied with disbelief:

> *Chadwick: I don't expect scientists to say "We don't know."*
>
> *Entomologist: I don't think there would be any scientists if everything was known. What drives science is curiosity–what more is there to learn? Every time I go out, I see something new.*
>
> *Chadwick: Why don't I see the beetles?*
>
> *Entomologist: You have to learn to see. Most people's view of beetles is limited to scraping them off the windshield–they are an annoyance. But they are there. They make up 25% of the animate life forms surrounding us. You have to learn to look.*

So rather than objectivity, sterility and dispassion, science is about curiosity and awareness and about learning to look. And, perhaps, as I do, you also hear in the voice of the entomologist, about wonder.[2] For scientists are like children for whom life is a constant variation on the theme of trying new things, going where they couldn't go yesterday, "going where they've never gone before," as it says in Star Trek. Many of us lose this quality of ceaseless experimentation when we grow up. But it is precisely this quality that made many scientists great. This is Louis Pasteur with his microscope, Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin with their oral poliomyelitis vaccines, and Nobel Prize laureate Barbara McClintock with her discovery that sudden evolutionary changes can come from "jumping genes," genes which wander from one position on a chromosome to another. Indeed, a common experience reported by many scientists is that what drew them to science was the wonder of gazing up at a starry night sky at an early age.

So, this protracted discussion was supposed to convince you that the stereotypical view of science depicted earlier by word associations no longer represents reality, if it ever did. Now at the risk of stating the obvious, let me make explicit my conviction that many of these characteristics of science are also true of teaching.

An Attitude of Inquiry

Teaching, like science, is at its best when it is passionate. But like good scientists (and unlike artists), teachers need not—should not—be captivated by their own performance. There is a good reason that much of the literature in science uses the passive voice—and it is not so much to give the appearance of objectivity as the grammar books like to tell us. It is because in science the focus is on the results. Similarly, in teaching we are less concerned, or should be, with the teacher's performance and more with the learning outcomes.

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[1] *My recollection of an interview (February 3, 1996) I listened to on the radio as I was driving my*

[2] *The discussion based on wonder was inspired by a column by Anthony Acheson, which appeared in* The Brattleboro Reformer, *Saturday, July 29, 1995, page 17, entitled "The Wonder of Childhood."*

As with science, teaching benefits from an attitude of inquiry. Much is mysterious about the teaching/learning process, and those who approach it as a mystery to be solved (recognizing that some things about teaching and learning may be forever beyond explanation) will see their teaching as a continuing adventure. Moreover, the intellectual engagement that accompanies disciplined inquiry will be a source of continual professional renewal and refreshment (Prahbu 1990).

Dr. Larsen-Freeman deals with the complexities of syntax.

Like scientists, teachers approach practice with theories on how teaching and learning are supposed to work. Their theories-in-action (Schon 1983) may or may not be explicit, but they are what drives and shapes in a fundamental way what teachers do in the classroom. Teachers who know this about their teaching, who use every lesson as "an inquiry, some further discovery, a quiet form of research" (Britton 1987: 15), and who follow the lesson with a period of reflection, out of which new understandings arise and are assimilated—such teachers are scientists in the best sense of the role.

Social Dimension

"But," you might be asking, "is it proper science if a teacher examines her practice in terms of her students' learning and all that comes of the investigation is the potentially enhanced learning of her own students within the confines of the four walls of her own classroom?" While theory construction, modification through disciplined inquiry, and enhanced learning outcomes are significant accomplishments, I think the answer is that these alone do not make teaching science. There remains one additional dimension to being a scientist that must be satisfied. And although it may not be obvious at first, it is the social dimension.

For despite what may be perceived to be a rather solitary profession, scientists have a social mission. They seek to make the world a better place for us all. Whether or not they have accomplished this is of course debatable, but the will to try to improve life motivates many scientists. And the actuality of doing this comes through scientists' membership in an international community of peers, a community which transcends cultural boundaries. While exploring in science may be a lonely business initially, as the biologist Thomas puts it, "sooner or later, before the enterprise reaches completion, as we explore, we call to each other, communicate, publish, send letters to the editor, present papers, and cry out [our] finding" (Thomas 1974: 15 in Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993).

> *Similarly, the quiet research the teacher conducts in her classroom—like all forms of research (educational or otherwise) is a fundamentally social and constructive activity. Not only can each separate piece of teacher research inform subsequent activities in the individual teacher's classroom, but also each piece potentially informs and is informed by all teacher research past and present. Although teacher research is not always motivated by a need to generalize beyond the immediate case, it may in fact be relevant for a wide variety of contexts.* (Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993: 24)

Thus, like scientists, teachers need to share their findings with a community of others, and in doing so, to subject them to the scrutiny of peers. Perhaps, as Freeman (1996) observes, teachers need to find new genres for this sharing. Perhaps, also, we need new criteria for what it takes to pass muster with a peer group. Rather than the positivist criteria of validity and generalizability, we might consider notions such as trustworthiness (Mishler 1990) and particularizability (Clarke 1995).

The Horizontal Growth of Knowledge

How case studies function in knowledge generation is the subject of a much longer treatise than I have time for here. Suffice it to say that the debate as to whether or not teacher research is science and thus advances the knowledge in the field hinges on what is meant by knowledge. As Eisner (1991) points out, a view that presumes knowledge is "inert material" that can be collected, stored, stockpiled (p. 210), may make little

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room for teachers' systematic investigations where the unit of analysis is the single case study. On the other hand, if one sees knowledge growth as more horizontal than vertical, teacher research yields multiple conceptual frameworks that others can use to better illuminate the understanding they have of their own situation (in Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993: 59).

As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) have put it recently:

> *We think that with teacher research, knowledge will accumulate as communities of school-based and university-based teachers and researchers read and critique one another's work, document and perhaps disseminate their responses, and create a network of citations and allusions, and hence begin to build a different kind of "interpretive universe" (p .59).*

The signs are encouraging for such a universe to be born. Already, those in high office are beginning to put resources into teacher research. In government, we learn that the U.S. Department of Education has established a Division of Teacher Research; in the academy, we note the example of a book written by teachers about their teaching and their students' learning, *Teachers' Voices*, being published by the National Center for English Language Teaching and Research at Macquarie University in Australia; and, finally, in professional associations, we find officers in our own professional association, TESOL, spending time this week discussing the role of research in a teachers' professional association. Whatever the outcome of these initiatives, they will demand of us (and I include not only teachers, but also teacher educators, administrators, and publishers) that we commit ourselves to standards of professionalism, standards which depend upon a continual process of self-reflection and education.

Conclusion

Ultimately, though, these actions are insufficient. If teaching is a science and we are to be scientists, we each need to cultivate an attitude of inquiry about our practice. We need to approach teaching and learning with wonder and openness. We need to find the courage to question and the discipline to remain with the question. We need to develop the habit of reflectivity. And we need to be passionate enough about what we do to risk sharing with others our understandings and our explanations. Only then is teaching a profession which generates its own theory or knowledge base (Larsen-Freeman 1990). Only then can teaching become something that is "profoundly other than a solitary profession whose practice is driven by unexamined routine" (Frederick Erickson in Cochran-Smith and Lytle 1993: ix). Only then is teaching a science.

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Precision, Elegance and Simplicity: Perspectives on TESOL and Art

Dr. G. Richard Tucker, whose Ph.D. is from McGill University in Canada, is Professor of Applied Linguistics and Head of the Department of Modern Languages at Carnegie Mellon University. Prior to joining CMU, he served as President of the Center for Applied Linguistics, and before that as Professor of Psychology and Linguistics at McGill University. He has published more that 180 books and articles on many different aspects of second language teaching and learning. In addition to his work here in North America, he has worked in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa.

G. Richard Tucker

Background

My task was to listen carefully to presentations by my colleagues, following which I have been asked: (1) to offer a spontaneous personal perspective on their comments, as well as (2) to provide an indication of where TESOL should go from here in pursuing its agenda–either as science or as art. In listening to the introductory remarks by David Nunan, and then the presentations by Elana Shohamy, Henry Widdowson, and Diane Larsen-Freeman, I was struck by the similarity to a point made in an article that I had recently read by Jackie Schachter (1993). Schachter described the field of second language acquisition (SLA) as being analogous to a "Necker Cube" (i.e., to a drawing that can be viewed sequentially, but not simultaneously, as two separate cubes). Thus, she noted that some individuals see SLA as pedagogical while others see it as theoretical. I would argue, by extension, that some typically view TESOL as art and others as science. Schachter noted that both views hold enormous and cumulative potential for their effects on public policy decisions, a point to which I shall return.

Positions of the Other Speakers

In his opening remarks, Nunan called our attention to the dramatically contrasting views expressed by Alan Purves, Evelyn Hatch, and Ted Bell with respect to the relative contributions of art or science to the advancement of learning and teaching. Shohamy began by identifying a series of overly simplistic dichotomies that are often interjected into discussions in the language education field (e.g., BICS vs. CALP; hard data vs. personal imagination and expression; cognitive factors vs. affective factors; art vs. science; etc.). She asserted that science is an integral part of art, and that artists are noted for making principled uses of their varied techniques. She further observed that the field of TESOL draws from both; but she worried that the scientific component in our field is decreasing relatively dramatically, a claim that she substantiated by reporting the results of an informal content analysis of presentations at the present conference.

Widdowson began his remarks by noting that science is seductive, as evidenced by a conjurer's often impressive performance. He asserted that science undermines our trust in our own experiences, and expressed the opinion that what science reveals is not truth, but only a version of reality. He described some of the key tenets of the scientific method by which one relies on the control of circumstances or variables (with an emphasis on the word "controls"). He declared that TESOL cannot itself be a science, but that it must be informed by science. He asked rhetorically at one point what is the TESOL equivalent of the Teflon frying pan; a question to which one was sure that he did not intend the answer "i+1"! Widdowson pursued an alternative portrayal of TESOL based upon art where the findings per se of investigations are not relevant; but rather where one is asked to relate ideas to one's own circumstances. He concluded by portraying teachers as artists of their craft rather than as *mere* (emphasis his) scientists or technologists.

Larsen-Freeman developed a type of interactionist position. She alluded to the voices of prominent scientists, and noted that science deals with mystery, that it deals not just with prediction but with comprehension and explanation, that what drives scientists is curiosity. She argued that these general properties are also true of teachers and teaching with the addition of what she referred to as a social dimension. She concluded with a brief discussion of how knowledge accumulates, and stressed how encouraged she has been by recent educational policy discussions and decisions focusing on systemic educational reform in the United States and Australia.

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John Harrison and Longitude

I wish now to return to the analogy of TESOL as a "Necker Cube." Here I would argue that in order to affect public policy, in order to improve the quality of education for the children and the adults who are entrusted to our care–that we must be both scientists and artists. In my general preparation for today's session, I happened fortuitously to read two quite different accounts, one a recent monograph by Dava Sobel; the other a newspaper article in the *New York Times*. The latter described the power and the beauty embodied in Einstein's manuscript on general relativity; the other, the development in the 18th century of the chronometer by John Harrison. Let me first say a word or two about John Harrison's accomplishments as chronicled in Sobel's monograph (1995).

John Harrison was a remarkable man, a self-educated man of humble origin, who solved the thorniest dilemma of the 18th century, the longitude problem. Until he found the solution to the problem of accurate measurement of longitude, explorers who ventured out of sight of land were literally "lost at sea." In her compelling monograph, which I found in the airport book shop, Sobel describes the ways in which Harrison was influenced by the natural philosopher and mathematician Nicholas Sanderson from Cambridge University. She described Harrison's laborious, but ultimately successful, pursuit of the goal of developing an instrument to measure longitude with an absolute precision that was simultaneously beautiful. Here is her description of his invention, the chronometer:

> *Though large for a pocket watch, at five inches in diameter, it is minuscule for a seaclock, and weighs only three pounds. Within its paired silver cases, a genteel white face shows off four fanciful repeats of a fruit-and-foliage motif drawn in black. These patterns ring the dial of Roman numeral hours and Arabic seconds, where three blued-steel hands point unerringly to the correct time. The Watch, as it soon came to be known, embodied the essence of elegance and exactitude.*
>
> *Inside this marvel, the parts look even lovelier than the face. The designs serve no functional purpose other than to dazzle the beholder. And under the plate, among the spinning wheels, diamonds, and rubies do battle against friction. These tiny jewels, exquisitely cut, take over the work that was relegated to antifriction wheels and mechanical grasshoppers in all of Harrison's big clocks. With his marine clocks, John Harrison tested the waters of space-time. He succeeded, against all odds, in using the fourth-temporal-dimension to link points on the three-dimensional globe. He wrested the world's whereabouts from the stars, and locked the secret in a pocket watch.* (Sobel, pp. 106-107).

Einstein's Manuscript

Let me turn now to an account of Einstein's manuscript. I was intrigued when I recently read an article in the *New York Times* by Robin Pogrebin (1996) describing a recently-held auction by Sotheby's at which one of the main attractions was Einstein's original manuscript developing the theory of general relativity.

> *What turns a piece of paper into history is that it marks a seminal moment, a particular point in time, when conventional thinking was challenged and forever changed. What makes it art is not only the peculiar beauty of its yellowed pages, faded ink or elegant script, but that it lives, infused with the spirit of the author's own hand. The manuscript in which Albert Einstein elaborated on his special theory of relativity is both momentous as one of the central scientific tenets of the modern age and captivating as a window into how the gears turned in one of the greatest minds in history.*
>
> *The manuscript, in German, laid the groundwork of Einstein's general theory of relativity in 1916, and it represents a broadening of Einstein's thinking beyond the physical to the mathematical. But it is its unfinished roughness that makes the manuscript exceptional, offering rare insight into the meticulous machinations of Einstein's creative process: how he puzzled out equations, continually rephrased his thoughts and labored to perfect his sentences; how tough he was on himself in trying to clearly convey concepts of a mind-bending complexity. He was a famously literate writer, one of the relatively few 20th century scientists who is famous as a stylist.*

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Accuracy, Systematicity and Accessibility

Let me return once again to the analogy of the "Necker Cube." It is my strong belief that we as TESOL professionals must be both scientists and artists. We must continue, for example, to document effective practice; to document the contributions of competing social, political, economic, and pedagogical factors on the processes and the products of teaching and learning. We must aim, I believe, for accuracy, systematicity, and accessibility in our findings. We must encourage work that is contextualized and that is collaborative–work that draws upon a broad range of models and analytical techniques; our questions and our agenda should determine the methods that we choose, and not vice versa.

I was struck recently by a characterization of the learning process in the new monograph by Gail Burnaford and colleagues (1996): "...learning is a messy, mumbled, non-linear, recursive and sometimes unpredictable process." We must bring order and sense to that learning. But, more importantly, we must tell the story of the complexities of these constructs that we call teaching and learning with the same elegant simplicity and power with which Carl Sagan has unlocked for so many the mysteries of the universe (see, for example, Sagan, 1994).

We must describe the needs of the children and of the adults who desperately seek access to educational, social, and economic opportunities, not in the arcane and jumbled jargon so characteristic of academia, but with the precision, the elegance, and the simplicity of an artist. Only then can we hope to reach and to affect those responsible for the formulation of public policy. In the past, we have not been very effective in telling our stories, and while it is easy to blame the close-minded, bigoted listener, surely we—the tellers—must bear much of the blame.

Can we tell our stories with the same artistic beauty that characterized Einstein's manuscript on general relativity? Can we build a pedagogical chronometer as beautiful and as powerful as that built by John Harrison? The simple answer is that we must, for if we do not, untold thousands of our students will remain forever "lost at sea."

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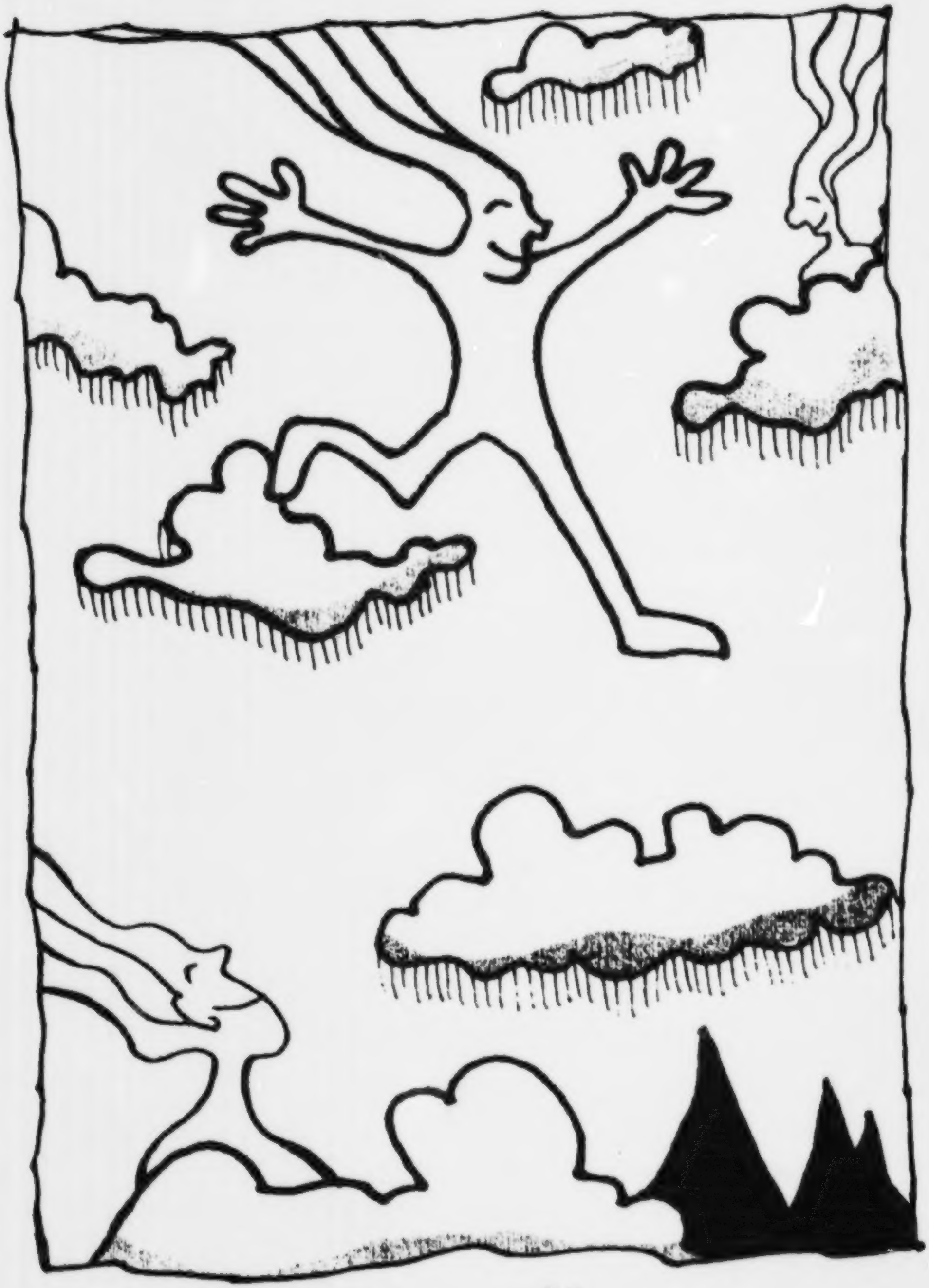

Can I Love You?

A Child's Adventure with Puppets and Play

by George Dempsie

George Dempsie is a kindergarten teacher at Easterly Parkway Elementary School in State College, Pennsylvania, where he has been on the faculty for ten years. He recently completed a master's degree in Children's Literature at Pennsylvania State University.

It was the first day of school. As my newly formed group of first-graders gathered on the carpet for attendance, one girl lagged behind in the cloak area, her tiny frame half hidden by the bulky backpacks and sweaters. I happened to notice her and tried to coax this reticent child to join us at the carpet. She was very reluctant. When I asked her to tell me her name, she remained utterly silent, yet her huge brown eyes flashed volumes of fear and uncertainty. I wondered if she understood English. I also questioned whether she had wandered into the wrong classroom–her small stature looked more like that of a kindergartner than a first-grader. In the next few minutes, as I took attendance, the girl's identity was revealed through the process of elimination. She was Shazana, a new student of English as a Second Language (ESL) who had just arrived from the Middle East. Shazana continued to be withdrawn and kept to herself throughout the remainder of our first day together. This did not surprise me, as I had worked with many other ESL children over the years who had gone through a similar nonverbal period as they became acclimated to their new environment.

This predictable "silent" or "mute" period has been identified in literature by ESL researchers (Tabors and Snow, 1994; Itah and Hatch, 1978). At lunch time, I decided that a quick rview of Shazana's records would be helpful. I discovered that my initial perceptions had been correct–she was almost a full year younger than her new American classmates. This wide gap in age worried me because I was concerned that it might impede Shazana's social integration, an area identified by researchers as very important for young ESL learners who are just entering school (Handscombe, 1994). I questioned my principal about Shazana's placement. He felt it was least disruptive to her if she remained in my class. He also assured me that she would qualify for ESL tutoring from our school's ESL instructor. She could attend a daily half-hour session with him to support her English language acquisition. At the end of our first day of school, I watched as the children marched out the door to go home, with Shazana in tow, struggling to keep up with her taller new peers. I knew I had my work cut out for me.

A Puppet Named "Hilda"

As her new teacher in a regular education classroom, I wondered how I could effectively relate to Shazana as a new ESL student. I wondered how I could best create a classroom environment which would foster a ready acceptance for her within the classroom community. Little did I know that the answer would be at my fingertips, literally. The next day I introduced the class to my "team teacher"–a hand puppet named "Hilda." Shazana's interactions with the puppet are the basis for this article, which relates how my classroom puppet helped her become socially integrated within the classroom community. My observations and dialogue with her were gathered by audiotaping daily sessions between the class and my puppet.

Since my student teaching days, "Hilda" had become an integral part of my classroom program. After reading an article in a teaching magazine about the effectiveness of puppets with young children, I had searched in area toy stores for a hand-held puppet which I would feel comfortable using. I settled upon a small, orange felt puppet that resembled "Brunhilda," the famous comic strip character. I renamed her "Hilda," and in my mind I recreated a new character and personality for her as a little girl who could be perceived by the children as a fellow classmate. My student teaching supervisor and subsequent principals were all very supportive of my puppetry attempts. As I achieved success with my puppetry, I was often surprised that more of my colleagues did not try this effective teaching tool. Over the next few years, I continued to add to my hand-puppet collection. Hilda was soon followed by a larger orange puppet who became her mother and a younger friend named "Packy" which resembled the video game character Pac-man.

The puppet characters lived in a purple cardboard box house which sat atop my filing cabinet behind my desk in the classroom. I purposely made the puppets inaccessible to the children; I wouldn't allow them to ma-nipulate the puppets because I believed that this would detract from their mystique. They were reserved for teacher manipulation.

Buttons, a bit of cloth and Dempsie's voice create characters that children find fascinating.

Our Problems Were Hilda's Problems

The puppets would visit with the class for a few minutes every day. Often Hilda would share a poem or just talk with the children. Research has shown that puppets can be a dynamic learning tool in helping children develop communication skills (Quisenberry, 1972; Ackerman, 1994). I'd also learned through previous experience with Hilda that classroom puppetry provided unusual opportunities for constructive social experiences involving cooperation, peer interaction, and the sharing of ideas, feelings, and fantasies (Leyser, 1984). My puppets lived in a world which I constructed that closely mirrored daily events from within our particular classroom. For example, if a child wasn't getting along with a friend, then Hilda would have a similar problem. I always used Hilda in an impromptu fashion without imposed lines or set scripts. This helped me to better build upon the children's free interactions with her. This sort of "spontaneous improvisation" has been shown to stimulate children's thinking, imagination, creativity, and spontaneity (Leyser, 1984). When giving life to the puppets, I was always in full view of the class. Most of the puppet visits occurred as I sat in a chair with the class gathered around me on the carpet. The children could see that I was giving voice to Hilda as my mouth moved, but somehow it never mattered to them with their vivid imaginations.

Shazana Smiles

Throughout that second day of school, I had built momentum concerning the children's first meeting with Hilda. I mentioned to the class that at the end of the day they would have an opportunity to meet the resident of the purple house which they'd been asking about. There was an air of excitement as the children gathered at the carpet in anticipation of meeting my puppet friend.

As I walked over to retrieve Hilda from her house, I was interrupted by a commotion of pushing, shoving, and angry voices behind me. I was very surprised to see who it involved–a well-mannered boy and Shazana, who up to that point had not yet spoken to any of us. As I helped sort out the problem, I learned that Shazana had asserted herself by displacing another child. She had insisted upon sitting up front in order to more closely view the puppet and me. Once the problem was resolved and we made room for both children, I retrieved Hilda and the class met her. The children–especially Shazana–seemed entranced by the puppet. For the first time, I saw Shazana laugh and smile in the classroom as the puppet spoke to the children in her high-pitched, squeaky voice.

Over the next few weeks as I observed Shazana's interactions with the puppet, I began to notice a pattern. The majority of her verbal interactions with Hilda appeared in the form of questions. Most of her questions occurred within the first two weeks as she got acquainted with the puppet. For example, within minutes of meeting the puppet, Shazana blurted out the following questions:

> *Shazana: (without raising her hand) What's your name?*
> *Puppet: My name's Hilda—what's yours?*

Shazana giggled and would not answer the puppet. So I had Hilda respond by restating the question:

> *Hilda: Can you tell me your name?*
> *(Shazana shakes her head "no.")*
> *Hilda: No? Why not?*

Shazana responded by poking the puppet with her finger. I was surprised at her forwardness. All day leading to the puppet visit, she had remained a silent observer, interacting with no one in the class. She continued to interact freely with Hilda:

> *Shazana: Do you have a sister?*
> *Hilda: No, I don't. Do you?*
> *(Shazana shakes her head "No.")*

Social Interaction: Goal One

Over the next several days, many of the children asked questions when speaking to the puppets. However, Shazana tended to be the most inquisitive. She asked Hilda questions such as: "Are you a girl? Do you have a mouth?" and "Do you have a brother?" Her interactions with my other puppets were also in the form of questions. She asked Hilda's friend if she could speak English. She asked Hilda's mother if she could bring Hilda outside to visit. Research into the questioning communication of ESL students has shown that a student's questions are important in second language acquisition. Students will ask questions for two reasons–to negotiate meaning or to seek information (Skilton and Meyer, 1993). Clearly, Shazana's questions to my puppets fit into these categories. Research has also shown that students with a lower second-language proficiency make more confirmation checks and clarification requests (Skilton and Meyer, 1993). This finding was consistent with Shazana's status as a child who was new to our country and culture. Through her repeated questioning, she was able to verify her comprehension and begin to make sense of her new environment. As I evaluated Shazana's interactions with Hilda during the first week, I was struck by two things. First, because she hadn't spoken much in class, I had underestimated Shazana's oral language skills. Her comprehension and her English proficiency were much stronger than I had judged, as evidenced by her ability to communicate with the puppet. Thus, social integration would be my main concern for her. The rest of the class had not yet intentionally rejected her, but Shazana was being largely ignored by the group due to her lack of interaction with them. She seemed content to keep to herself.

Encounters with "Hilda" rarely fail to evoke animated responses from Dempsie's students.

Shazana Hides Her Name

Secondly, I was intrigued by her continued reluctance in revealing her name, which she refused to tell Hilda, the class community, or me. Handscombe (1994) maintains that a child's name is an important symbol and that one of the important subtasks of becoming socially integrated involves the building of an identity. I felt that Shazana's refusal to reveal her name had some sort of symbolic significance. I suspected that as a new student, Shazana was too intimidated by her new environment and that this refusal to name herself was because it felt too risky for her. As I continued audio taping and transcribing Shazana's interactions with the puppets over the next month, other patterns began to emerge. I could see that she was beginning to bond with them:

> *Hilda: It's getting late; I have to go inside now.*
> *Shazana: Can I kiss you? (She does so.)*
> *Hilda: Have a nice evening.*
> *Shazana: Can I love you?*
> *Hilda: Sure! (The puppet returns to her house.)*

Shazana's request for permission to love the puppets, verified by her physically demonstrative behavior, was a sure sign to me that she was beginning to let down her guard in class. Many of Shazana's other interactions seemed to be concerned with the puppets' physical appearance:

> *Shazana: (to Hilda's mother) Do you have a mouth?*
> *Mrs. Hilda: Yes, and I'm talking with it now.*
> *(Shazana reaches up to touch one of the puppet's curlers.)*
> *Mrs. Hilda: That's one of my curlers. They make my hair look nice.*
> *Shazana: Your nose is bigger.*
> *Mrs. Hilda: Yes, my nose is bigger than my daughter's. Now I have to go in and get ready for work.*

I wondered if Shazana's focus on the visible, concrete, physical appearances of the puppets was due, in part, to her young age. She was almost a full year younger than my other students and clearly, using a

Piagetian term, in the "preoperational" stage of her intellectual development. Children in this stage of thought connect to their world best through mental images: they lock into the perceptual world (Hendrick, 1980). I also thought that perhaps Shazana's emphasis on the physical aspect of the puppets might be related to her ESL status. I knew from experience that often such children–new to an educational system–rely heavily upon visual reinforcement in order to build background schema for understanding something.

First Conversations

By mid-September, Shazana began having her first impromptu conversations with me while away from the puppets. These discussions centered around the physical appearances of the puppets. She commented upon the similarities between Hilda and a scarecrow doll. She explained to me that they both had a hat and mittens. On another occasion, one afternoon in mid-September when Hilda came out for her daily visit, the children were surprised to see a tiny Band-Aid on the puppet's cheek. Shazana was the first to notice this. She jumped from her seat, pointing to the puppet's face:

Shazana: What is this? What is there?
Hilda: (to the class) Does anyone know what I'm wearing?
Class: (in unison) A Band-Aid.
Hilda: I ran into the classroom and fell.
Shazana: Why it small?
Hilda: Because it was a small cut.

There were also a number of occasions when Shazana shared comparative observations about herself and the puppet. For instance, a few days after the puppet appeared with her Band-Aid, Shazana revealed her bandaged finger to Hilda. On another occasion she showed the puppet how strong she was becoming:

Shazana: (to Hilda) I have a little bit of muscles. (Shazana holds her arm up for Hilda to examine.) And you have, too!
Hilda: (gleefully) And I do, too!
Shazana: Let's see.

On another occasion, Shazana got the puppet's attention in order to show off her newly braided hair. She insisted that Hilda should touch it. Shazana continued to make self-comparisons with the puppets:

Shazana: You have a, a eye bigger.
Hilda: I have bigger eyes?
Shazana: I have bigger you.
Hilda: Yes, yours are bigger than mine and you're taller than I am.

I began to wonder if these self-comparisons with the puppet were Shazana's way of attempting to develop a connection with it. It seemed reasonable to me that as a young child, Shazana's age-appropriate egocentrism would factor into her initial attempts at reaching out to others (namely the puppets) in beginning socialization.

Do You Have Teeth?

Throughout September I continued to see very little interaction between Shazana and the rest of the class although she would occasionally talk to me. She continued to keep to herself both in class and on the playground. However, her fascination with the puppets continued to grow. As I closely observed her interactions with Hilda, another interesting pattern emerged concerning Shazana's imagination and a physical attribute of the puppet:

Shazana: (to Hilda) Do you have a teeth?
Hilda: Well, what does it look like? Do I? (The puppet opens her toothless mouth and reveals an empty cavern for Shazana to examine.)
Shazana: YES.

Several classmates began bantering back and forth with Shazana about the absence of teeth in the puppet's mouth. Still, she insisted that the puppet did have "a teeth." The next day, a similar experience occurred when Shazana insisted upon examining another puppet's mouth:

Shazana: Do you have a teeth? Let me open your mouth.

The puppet complied and as Shazana examined the puppet's mouth, she giggled. The earlier interaction intrigued me because of Shazana's determined insistence that the toothless puppet did have teeth. I wondered if perhaps this insistence could be interpreted as an exertion of Shazana's imagination. From my other experiences using puppets with younger children, I often found that the imagination of the spectators (in this case, Shazana) often played a far greater part than the exertions of the actors (in this case, the toothless puppet). Other puppet research verifies this (Burn, 1977). In the article "Puppets: The Master Motivators," Montgomery (1982) asserted that children often attribute human qualities to puppets (p. 18). If one defines the imagination as "the power of the mind to form mental images or concepts of something that is not real or present" (Ackerman, 1994, p. 62), it can clearly be seen that Shazana "invoked" teeth into the puppet's mouth via her creative young imagination.

No stage was needed when "Hilda" came out to chat with Shazana.

A Strong Wish To Be Included

By now it was early October and we'd been in school for a month. I was pleased as Shazana began showing an interest in the other children. I'd observe her on the outskirts of their play, quietly observing but not yet participating. She began imitating other children's behaviors during the puppet visits. Several children made pictures for the puppet and placed them in her mailbox. When Hilda would visit, she would "share" her mail with the class and offer a kind word about the pictures. The children enjoyed the attention that their mail received. On several occasions when Hilda asked the artist to identify himself/herself, Shazana proudly raised her hand. In both instances, it soon surfaced that the real artists were other children who were a bit unhappy that Shazana took credit for their work. I sensed that these attempts by Shazana were actually positive beginning signs of her longing to be included in the classroom community.

A Fuzzy Brown Bat

Shazana also more positively imitated other classmates' behavior when several children started creating impromptu puppet friends for Hilda to meet. The children, including Shazana, created "instant" hand puppets by pulling their shirt sleeves over their hands and conversing with Hilda using disguised voices. Several days later, Shazana appeared with a store-bought hand puppet from home. It was a fuzzy brown bat. She was anxious to introduce it to Hilda, who was visiting with her new pet elephant:

Shazana: I have a new friend, but he won't scare you–he scare the elephant!!

Shazana held up her bat puppet and I made the elephant stampede away, amid shrieks of laughter from the class. The children also feigned fear of the bat, who with Shazana's help swooped through the crowd of children.

Hilda: You better put your friend away–it's hard to hold a ten-ton elephant! (Hilda then looks upset that her pet has run away.)

Shazana: No–he won't scare you.... He LOVE you! Don't be sad.

I found it most interesting that Shazana chose to bring a bat puppet into class. Research suggests that the character which is created for a puppet "actually comes from some aspect of its creator that may not even be consciously exposed in everyday life... Its inner 'anima' is a gift of its builder" (Ackerman, 1994, pp. 62-63). Additional research concurs that the characters which a child chooses to represent through puppetry are often a revelation to both a therapist and a child (Currant, 1985). I thought that Shazana's choice of a bat was a very revealing one. Bats are small and possess a tiny voice (both of which I would use to characterize Shazana). But these tiny creatures also possess the incredible power to clear an entire room of people within seconds of their appearance. Perhaps Shazana, in her helplessness as an ESL student in a strange environment, longed for some power over her new situation. In short, she was able to use her bat as "a communication channel to allow a variety of feelings to flow in an acceptable way" (Burn, 1977, p. 4). She also reaffirmed her feelings of attachment toward my puppet by her declaration of love and concern.

A Symbolic Breakthrough

Perhaps Shazana's increased self-confidence from using puppets led to the next event in mid-October which I felt was a symbolic breakthrough for her. It happened as the other children were introducing their puppets to Hilda:

> *Beth: Hilda, my puppet is a little shy.*
> *Hilda: (to Beth's puppet) Who are you? What's your name?*
> *Beth: (speaking for the puppet) I don't really have one....*
> *Hilda: I thought everyone had one... (Hilda turns to Shazana.) What's your name?*
> *Shazana: SHAZANA!*
> *Hilda: Now you can tell me! You wouldn't on the first day of school!*

It seemed like a major milestone to me that Shazana would finally reveal her name to Hilda and the rest of the classroom community. This was clearly a sign that she was finally feeling a connection to the group. Her further statements seemed to reiterate that she was seeing herself as part of the group:

> *Hilda: I have an idea.... I know how I can meet all of your puppet friends!*
> *Shazana: AND ME, TOO!*
> *Hilda: I want to have a party for all my puppet friends. Bring them to the party!*

At the puppets' party a few days later, Shazana continued to freely interact with my puppets. Each of the children brought their own puppet from home to attend Hilda's party. Many of the puppets wore costumes because it was the week of Halloween. This time, Shazana's puppet was a bear. Initially shy, it was soon coaxed into conversation by Hilda who was trying to determine what sort of bear it was. Shazana again demonstrated her affection for Hilda by making her bear hug and kiss Hilda following their talk. Around this time, I began to notice a change in Shazana's behavior. She began to participate with other children in games on the playground. She also began sharing positive things with the puppets about her accomplishments at home and at school, such as "I can read" and "I can swim."

In early November she evidenced self-confidence by volunteering to stand in front of the class and recite a poem of Hilda's which she had tried to memorize. The puppet had given children copies of a simple poem to take home and practice reading. They were encouraged to join the puppet's poetry club by attempting to read or recite the poem from memory. Shazana enthusiastically raised her hand and bounced up front to attempt a recitation like her peers. When she reached the front of the class, however, she just giggled and looked around awkwardly.

Shazana Recites Hilda's Poem

Being so much younger than her peers, it was obvious that she might not be successful at reciting the poem. I was thrilled that she even felt comfortable enough in the group to attempt it. I had my puppet intervene by offering to help her. Hilda broke the poem apart, line by line. Shazana repeated after the puppet. At the poem's conclusion, several children supported Shazana's attempts with words of encouragement and inclusion:

> *Bill: (to Shazana) You got into the poetry club!*
> *Jim: Shazana—YOU did a poem!*

I was proud of the encouragement that these boys freely gave to Shazana, making her feel successful and included within our community of learners. It was just such an environment that Handscombe (1994) described in her article "Putting It All Together." She stated that "in effective mainstream classrooms, all students are socialized to accept responsibility for their own and each other's learning... and their feeling of belonging to the class group" (p. 350). By this time, although we had never openly discussed it, the class seemed well aware that Shazana was much younger than they were. This realization seemed to result in their treating her like a beloved little sister. At times, they were quite protective of her, and I observed them making a real effort to include her in their activities in class and on the playground. Shazana seemed happy in this role of "little sister," and she continued to relate well with the other children.

Self-Confidence Blossoms

Her self-confidence continued to blossom, and the very next week she volunteered to stand in front of the group again and sing a song to Hilda and the class. She also evidenced her newly found self-confidence by volunteering to be Hilda's teacher. She instructed the puppet on how to play a computer game:

> *Shazana: Ah, Hilda... You want to play that game?*
> *Hilda: You have a game? A computer game?*
> *Shazana: You must play that.*
> *Hilda: Turn it on and let me take a look. Why is it making all those bleeping noises? Shazana, what's happening?*
> *Shazana: See?*
> *Hilda: Oh, I see... you're pushing the orange buttons.*
> *Shazana: Yes, do that.*
> *Hilda: Will you help me? (Shazana complies by pushing the game's buttons. The computer bleeps and Shazana laughs.)*
> *Hilda: There! That's fun!*

Retrospect and Nostalgia

Shazana went on to have a very successful school year, integrating herself fully within our classroom community before returning to her country the following year. In retrospect, I am convinced that her successful social integration was greatly enhanced by her improvisational play experiences with my puppets. As an ESL student, her "first language" was really "play" which Lewis (1994) describes as "the basic language throughout which children anywhere in the world begin to make contact with each other and the things of their world" (p. 21). Hilda and her puppet friends provided a bridge between Shazana and my other students. Had it not been for the puppets, this social integration might not have occurred at all.

The last day of school on the playground, I was filled with nostalgia as I watched the tiny girl who refused to tell us her name in September. Now totally absorbed in a game of tag, she was laughing and running with a group of friends who were vying for her attention. "Over here!" they yelled as they called her name in unison, "Shazana!" It was a name that none of us would soon forget.

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Magical Boxes: A Window to the Imagination

Lora Friedman and Linda Simone

Lora Friedman is an assemblage artist, a published poet and president of Write Angle Communications. She assisted in the development of a whole-language thematic unit for grades Pre-K through 5, created by teachers at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education.

Linda Simone's poetry has appeared in Black Buzzard Review Westview and other journals and anthologies. Her children's picture book, Moon, *is forthcoming from Richard C. Owen Publishers, and she has completed the first in a series of rhyming riddle books for children. She is past president of the National Writers Union Westchester, NY/Fairfield, CT Chapter.*

> *Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.*
> Pablo Picasso

Introduction

This article is about children who use found objects such as coins, keys, plastic fish and mirrors to transform small boxes into representations of their dreams and perceptions, and who describe this activity in poetry and prose. The project grew out of the authors' creative collaboration, which began in 1987. Friedman is an assemblage artist who makes "light boxes" or "boxed poems" out of found objects. Her work is inspired by the great American shadow-box artist, Joseph Cornell. Simone, a poet, was intrigued by Friedman's light boxes and began keeping notes in a journal after contemplating them. The journal notes gave rise to poetry and poetic prose which brought Simone to a new level in her own creative development. The authors were struck by the power of visual art as a catalyst for creative writing. Imagery begetting imagery, their two imaginations began to converse. (The collaborative work that emerged from these cross-disciplinary explorations has been shown over the years, most notably, at the Neuberger Museum of Art in Purchase, NY.) The authors decided to share the magical process they had discovered with children. An account of the artists' research, rationale and experiences pilot testing Magical Boxes follows. They have since presented teacher training workshops at the Conference on the Role of the Imagination in Language Learning at New Jersey City University, the Writing Project at Columbia University Teachers College, the New York City Art Teachers Association, the New York State Art Teachers Association, and Iona College in New Rochelle, NY.

Sister Arts

Writing and visual art are complementary processes, "sister arts." It has been said that writing is a way of seeing. The idea of poets responding to the works of visual artists is not new: William Carlos Williams was inspired by Brueghel; Rilke by Van Gogh; Wallace Stevens by Picasso; Maya Angelou by Jean-Michel Basquiat; and Pablo Neruda by Joseph Cornell, to name a few (Bates 1994). Responding to a painting, sculpture or other visual art form stirs the writer's emotions and taps into his or her unconscious. This interaction often produces strong poetic language and vivid imagery. A similar process takes place in language acquisition: sensory stimulation leads to perception, perception leads to thought, thought leads to language. These concepts are echoed by Hubbard (1989, p. 150): "Pictures as well as words are important to human beings in their communication; we need to expand our narrow definition of literacy to include visual dimensions and in so doing answer the call to researchers for the recognition of multi-literacies and ways these literacies can work to complement each other." The authors hope that their work will contribute to the growing field of cross-disciplinary learning and literacy through the arts.

Creativity: Imagination in Action

All human beings are born with creative potential. However, especially in young children, creativity must be nurtured in order to thrive and grow. According to Alex F. Osborn (1963, pp. 65, 70, 157), the creative process is a combination of imagination and effort. It is active rather than passive, is born from first-hand–rather than vicarious–experience, and thrives on free experimentation. Today more than ever, vicarious experiences abound. Youngsters are bombarded by external stimuli, from TV's and computers to theme parks and "not-to-be-missed" movies, complete with product tie-ins. They are seduced by concepts of fun, enchantment and wonder conceived not in their own imaginations, but in prepackaged fantasies purveyed by adult marketers. Native American poet Joy Harjo (1996, p. 18) aptly labels television "the box that separates the dreamer from the dreaming." While these options have a place in entertaining youngsters and providing a needed respite for stressed-out parents, the question remains: When do our children get to explore and discover the limitless possibilities of their own creativity?

Some boxes are simple, some ornate; but all are magical for the children who make them.

The Critical Fourth Grade

Studies, most notably by E. Paul Torrance (1962), have shown that the fourth grade represents a pivotal stage in the development of creativity. Children ages 8-10 are enthusiastic, energetic, restless, imaginative and capable of reasoning. At the same time, because of their increased skill and desire to do things correctly, they are attracted to stereotypes and copying. For this reason, many fourth-graders teeter on the brink of having their creative spark extinguished, perhaps forever. Critical for children in this age group are frequent opportunities for creative experimentation and self-expression. "The more they are challenged to use their own abilities and the more they recognize the individuality in their work, the sooner they will relinquish the supporting crutch of imitation" (D'Amico and Buchman 1972, p. 88). Often, however, such opportunities are not available or possible due to mandated school curricula, overworked teachers or scarce family quality time. Arts experiences can be an important path to self-discovery.

Magical Boxes Goes to Class

Drawing from their personal experience and the insights of the experts cited above, the authors developed a thematic unit called Magical Boxes. In fall 1994, with the cooperation of a multidisciplinary team of classroom teachers led by a supportive district language arts coordinator, they pilot-tested the unit over a six-week period with 80 fourth graders at the Greenvale School in Eastchester, NY. The authors first met with the teachers to explain how the unit combines visual art and journal writing. Three classroom visits were approved, each to take place within 90 minutes. The theme of the boxes, although linked with subjects across the disciplines, was left purposefully broad, since the success of the program hinges on the children's freedom to work on what they care most about. At the outset, some of the teachers described the children as enthusiastic, but not particularly creative. The authors were determined to challenge this perception. They share the concern of poet and educator Georgia Heard (1989, p. 14), "Many people don't believe children have their own ideas, their own lives to express. After a while, children begin to believe this is true.'"

Day One: Meet the Artists

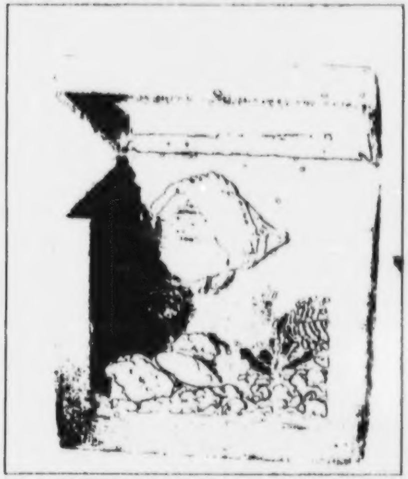
The first classroom visit was called "Meet the Artists." The authors brought Friedman's shadow-box assemblages for the children to see, and Simone's poetry and poetic prose, written in response to those same boxes, for them to hear. During that first visit, the authors discussed the history of box art in many cultures. They focused on artist Joseph Cornell, showing slides of his work. Born in Nyack, NY, Cornell had a unique gift for imbuing ordinary objects with a magical, almost spiritual quality. A brilliant eccentric, he was both an obsessive collector and a bibliophile. He kept voluminous journals that reflected keen observations about people he knew or chanced to meet, and the beauty he perceived in nature.

The Hunt for Dime Store Treasures

Cornell lived quietly in Queens, NY, with his mother and invalid brother. He never traveled farther than Manhattan antique shops, junk shops and secondhand book stores to search for dime store treasures. These served as the raw material for his art, which today is housed in some of the world's great museums and in private collections. He was very fond of children, perhaps because of his own childlike appreciation of and reverence for the small details of life. As one biographer wrote, Cornell felt that children "were filled with the innocence needed to see" (Ashton 1989, p. 224). Shortly before his death, the Cooper Union School of Art and Architecture hosted an exhibition of Cornell's work, exclusively for school children. The work was hung at child's-eye level.

Imagine Your World

The Greenvale children immediately connected to Cornell's work. The authors presented a theme to guide them: Imagine a world that you would like to enter and explore, if you could shrink yourself to the size of a small box–and create that world in your own magical box. The authors talked about the importance for each child of choosing a "special object" that resonated with personal meaning for them. This object would become the focal point–the heart or soul of their box. The children were told that they would be creating visual art works and doing free writing in their own "process journals." They were asked to go on a Magical Treasure Hunt at home that evening, and bring to class many inexpensive found objects such as scraps of cloth, shells, plastic flowers, photos, buttons, beads, feathers and other items on a suggested list. They also were asked to search for their special object. If they had trouble with this, they were reassured that they could choose one from the class treasure trove.



With plastic fish, seashells and pebbles, a child can create a coherent world.

Day Two: A Magical Garage Sale

Next came the Magical Garage Sale. When they got to class next day, the children put the objects from home in containers. Each child could go through the containers and take up to 15 items. The number was limited to encourage the careful choice of elements. Everyone got to select a sturdy box of manageable scale (mainly donated cigar boxes) within which to safely explore their imaginations. They also were provided with paper on which to chronicle their creative process. After the shopping spree, the students were instructed to begin creating their shadow-box assemblages, allowing their special object to be the driving force. They also were asked to make journal entries (their eyes only, unless they wished to share them later), recording their thoughts and feelings as they worked on their box. While the children worked to the soft strains of Mozart, the authors walked around to offer help as needed. When their boxes were completed, the children were encouraged to expand journal entries or to use them as a springboard for a poem or story about their magical box. Here are some of the results:

> *I think my magic box is colorful. It has a sun on the top of it's head. Inside is a world of snow and night. It has an aurora color and yellow, and green stars.*
>
> Mai

Kristina used a tropical fish refrigerator magnet as the focal point of a small cigar box, which she painted a vivid turquoise, inside and out. She filled the floor of the box with pastel-colored aquarium pebbles and small, delicate, green velvet wire-stemmed leaves and wrote:

> *One day, I took an adventure under the sea and saw lots of things. I saw a big fish with tropical colors. I swam around and saw lots of beautiful seashells. They were shades of purple, white, and light brown. Then, I saw a really big piece of coral. It kind of looked like a jungle gym, so I played on it. I jumped around and swam under it, and you should have seen all the bubbles I made. Then, something caught my eye. It looked like gold and silver treasures. I went over to it and it really was gold and silver. There was a round piece of wood in a corner and on top of it was diamonds. I didn't take all of the gold, silver and diamonds. I only took one of each because I wanted to leave some... I hope I could go back again, and maybe this time you could come. You'll love it.*

Day Three: The Magical Museum

During the authors' last visit, 80 boxes were showcased around the classroom and all the children had the opportunity to view their classmates' work. Each child was asked to write a short emotional or observational response to one box that they found particularly intriguing. Everyone was invited to read their writing aloud to the group. As one teacher observed, "The oral presentation made a connection between the artist and writer." The exercise of writing about another child's box also provided an opportunity to get to know and appreciate something about another person. After the completion of the program activities, the children's magical boxes and writings were displayed at the annual district arts festival and other community venues.

Boys, as well as girls, are drawn to this creative activity

More Comments from the Box Makers

A few months ago we made magic boxes. I made a hobby box, in it there were baseball and football cards, plastic dinosaurs and Styrofoam balls. When doing the magical box I wrote a story about a friend's box. It looked like dinosaurs invading the city. What I learned the most was people have different ideas than me.

Greg

When I was working on my magic box I had a dream that magic boxes were countries, and each had a story of how they began. Some say by imagination, others say it was by art. I say it was by skill and images to bring them to life.

Dan

I thought that the idea of making the magic boxes was good. You got to use your imagination and didn't have to worry if it's wrong or right. I had a lot of fun creating mine. It would be fun to imagine that I could go in my magic box. It would be fun to go into my box because some of the things that are very special, like little glass animals that my grandma gave to me.

Jenna

I enjoyed the magic box making because it was creative. I could express myself and make my own world. Mine was about a space station that had a lot of ships in it. It was also nice to be able to put anything on my magic box.

Michael

Sachiko: Preserving Precious Memories

For Sachiko, taking part in Magical Boxes allowed her to summon up strong emotion and longing for her native Japan and the family and friends she left behind. Using found objects, she created a delicate, "celestial" memory box that combined fabric scraps, beads, feathers, family photos and stamps from Japan. The top of the box was covered in a deep blue cloth, dotted with starry glitter and beads. As if she were wishing on a star, Sachiko wrote this poem:

I came from Japan
long ago, I could hardly
remember
about Japan, where
I was born,
lived
and
about my friends
I put all of my memories
from Japan
into my
magic box
and that is why it
special to
me

Luis: Connecting Through a Common Language

Teachers assumed that Luis, a quiet boy who communicated only in Spanish, would be unable to comprehend the Magical Boxes activities. But the authors could not help but notice his interest. Luis watched intently as the other children participated. When the authors gave him a box to explore, he instinctively knew what to do. Using bits of flooring, seashells, rings and small animal figures linked together by thin rainbow stripes of tempera paint, he employed the language of visual imagery to allow others a glimpse into his world. Then, he wrote in Spanish about the objects used to create his box. His writing was translated and typed in Spanish and English for all to see. Not only did this help Luis to feel a part of the group, it helped the other children, as well as the teachers, to see that, like his classmates, Luis had a unique vision to share.

Jennifer: Finding an Imaginative Focus

Initially described by her teachers as a scattered child who had difficulty focusing on her school work, Jennifer astonished everyone. Within the safe and intimate confines of a cigar box, she created her ideal bedroom–exquisitely detailed right down to the telephone, string of pearls, miniature shoes on the floor and tiny boom box that played music. Jennifer beamed when her box was accepted for inclusion in the Westchester Arts Council's "Creative Images" countywide exhibit of artwork by school children.

Felicia and Lauren: Going with Flow

Daniel Goleman (1995, p.91) describes "flow" as a state of mind devoid of self-consciousness or fear of failure. This condition typically arises when a person is engaged in a task that naturally sparks their interest while challenging them to do their best. A person in flow instinctively operates at peak performance: "...the sheer pleasure of the act itself is what motivates them." In their journals, Felicia and Lauren seem to express what it's like to be in a state of flow:

> *I love decorating boxes. So one day I decorated one in school. I decorated it with things I like and things I like to play with...One day when we got to work on our box I didn't glue anything onto it because I was thinking the whole time of what I wanted to put in it. I thought it would look cool if I put mirrors into my box to look all around the box. I was saying, "I like birds, maybe I could put feathers around the box and little beads to look like fruit." One last thing I put on my box was little chipmunks looking into the mirrors with hats on. So when I was done I loved it because it described what I like, and what I like to do.*
>
> Felicia

In school, students share the results of scavenger hunts around their houses.

Felicia's vivid account provides a window to her creative process. Instead of randomly pasting objects onto a box to complete the assigned task, Felicia and her classmates were encouraged to consider their choices carefully, using their process journals to help crystallize their ideas. Lauren, too, offers a surprisingly sophisticated and illuminating glimpse of the mental process she went through in creating her box:

> *While I was doing my box I thought comforting thoughts which were nice, relaxing and soothing. I kept on putting myself inside the box. That's what kept my brain going. I knew if I stayed inside the box I would finally make a real pretty box, and I did.*
>
> Lauren

Sharing the Magic

At the conclusion of the Magical Boxes pilot program, the authors were surprised at how eloquently the children expressed themselves when writing about their own work and the work of their peers. They also noticed that many children seemed to relish the notion that there is no right or wrong when it comes to creativity. The young artists shared found objects with one another, generously offering to their classmates things they had brought in from home or chose not to use in their assemblage. The authors also were struck by the flexibility demonstrated by some children who willingly fashioned a needed object out of the available materials when a ready-made item could not be found. Permitted to move freely about the room and observe others, the children honored their classmates' need to concentrate, and showed regard for the value of each individual's mode of self-expression–all without prompting from the adults. This atmosphere of mutual caring carried over to Day Three, when the children viewed and wrote about each other's work. Each magical box was treated as the reflection of a unique inner world which, by its very nature, warranted appreciation and respect on the part of the viewer.

Children are eager to describe the meaning and representation of their boxes.

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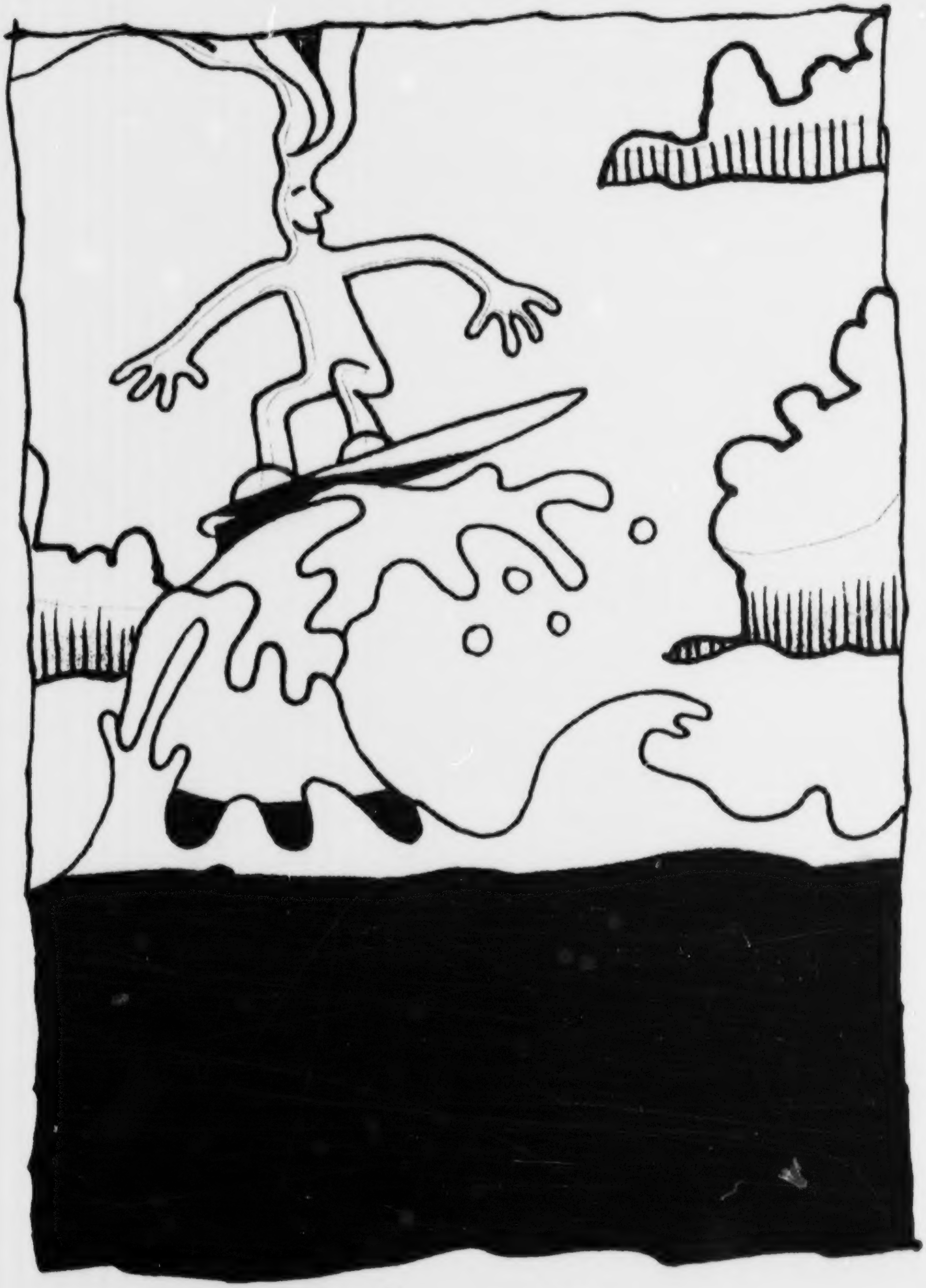

Evolving Texts: My Students and My Writings

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César Valmaña Iribarren

After having read Smith's *Myths of Writing* (1981), I subscribed to one of his statements–that students learn to enjoy writing in the presence of teachers who themselves write and enjoy writing. According to him, writing–as students are expected to learn it in the classroom–is a highly unnatural activity that reflects myths about the nature of writing, the maner in which it is acquired and practiced, and who is able to teach it. I felt encouraged to experiment with exposing my students to my personal writing (see Appendix 1), which they would use as starting points in their own writing experience. What began as a minor activity intended to add a little variety to my class ended up in my making fundamental discoveries about the teaching of writing–which I will share with you at the end of this short article.

Sharing Vulnerability

In using my personal writing in the classroom, I would be placing myself in the vulnerable position that students are asked to take every time they do an assignment. Because of this, I reasoned, several things would happen. First, rapport would be strengthened: the student would feel more like a participant in a larger, dynamic process than a subject proving that he could perform without making too many errors. Second, the writing process would be better illustrated as a result of my knowing exactly what the writer being studied–me–had in mind. Third, we teachers are quite ready to serve as a model of spoken English: why not of the written language as well? Fourth, I am a human being and knew that I would be understandably quite interested in comments on my own writing.

For the warm-up activity, I selected some short excerpts from my prose. I printed several of them as anonymous pieces that I submitted randomly to a group of my second-year undergraduates in English Language and Literature at the University of Havana. I asked them to write their impressions. Reactions to one of these, "Last Meeting in Prague," can be found in the Appendix 2 to this article. All did it enthusiastically; but some refused to share their work in public. I collected the papers and then taught my class according to the lesson plan on uses of the comma.

At home, I read the students' papers, enjoyed their attitudes, and wrote a few notes and questions about content and language. Likewise, I rewrote the pieces of my writing in poem form this time (see Appendix 1). As part of the overall experiment, I was interested in the students' response to different genres. Also, student responses had indicated that the excerpts had seemed out of context. Poems would be more autonomous. Poetry would also appeal to students' sensitivity and have more chance of opening their emotions in the written word. For the next class, I printed several copies of my new output and made the necessary changes in my lesson plans.

Asking Students To Be Editors

I asked the students to assume that they were editors who had been given room for including two pieces in the next month's issue of the literary journal they worked for. They had the task of recommending which pieces to choose and of writing a two-paragraph evaluation report to an imaginary editorial board. I also gave them copies of a real evaluation report from a publication I was familiar with. After discussing that report briefly, I assigned them to work in pairs and be ready to read their reports out loud at the end of the class. Examples of the writing they produced in about sixty minutes can be found in Appendix 3.

All of the teams did very well. My exclamations flattered them. I remarked, however, that no report had a formal opening, and that, with one exception, none had made clear distinction about which piece of writing they were referring to. Finally, I told them to revise their papers and hand them in. That evening, I read the work carefully and found that the writing teams had managed to be critical, selective and capable of supporting their choices. Nevertheless, most of the teams had jotted down, almost verbatim, what they would have spoken out, and language mistakes seemed relatively few. I did not grade the papers.

At the next class, I returned the drafts and held writing conferences with the authors. As part of the conferencing, I first had each team read its paper out loud to me. Then I remarked how much I liked this or that part, and wondered about expanding, eliminating or replacing sections in order to clarify the authors intentions, improve their judgments, or simply make better choices as writers. Later, I made oral comments on the major errors and asked the teams to write a new version. As the class ended, I collected the papers. Although these second versions (see Appendix 4) still lacked the formalities of an evaluation report, they proved auspicious. I enjoyed reading them again. Sentence form had been revised and improved, mainly emphasis and variety. Many mistakes in grammar, mechanics and punctuation had been eliminated–and of course new ones had been made.

Revising the Revisions

In the following class, I provided another example of a real evaluation from a real publication. I then assigned them to revise the second versions, focusing on punctuation and on unity and coherence at sentence and paragraph levels. It is true that not all the students saw their writing as an evolving process: some even complained about the endlessness of the task. At the end of class, however, I did receive a new draft from each writing team. These third versions showed that many students were deeply involved in the process of expressing their evaluations, and that their writing was allowing them to discover more precisely how they felt about what they had read in the poems. We discussed this and pointed out that reading can be intricately involved with act of composing.

After having reread the papers, I had mixed impressions. I felt rewarded by the students' reactions to my written pieces, by their motivation and commitment, and by the appreciation and creativity shown in their papers. On the other hand, I felt appalled at the distance between this writing and the point at which their evaluations would be fully competent. Yet we went forward, and I asked for a fourth version (see Appendix 5). I noticed that most papers had been improved to such an extent that they might be taken as final drafts. Others, however, had just undergone minor changes for the better–or worse. Still I wondered which draft would be considered the final one, and who would make that decision. In the next class, no sooner had conferencing begun than my doubts dissipated. Most students had made the decisions themselves and gave their reasons. Then, they wrote their final copy and handed it in. We had culminated our processes of writing in a generous spirit of mutual reinforcement rather than in a spirit of restrictive combat.'

Thanks to Vivian Zamel

Throughout these processes, I had been involved in a another and much deeper matter. As a result of perusing the available literature on the teaching of writing, I slowly and painfully came to a fresh, critical reflection on my own teaching. Vivian Zamel's "Responding to Student Writing" (1985) enlightened me. I remembered that I used to write what my language teachers wanted me to say. My written pieces were viewed as fixed when I first handed them in. Like my teachers themselves when they were students, I used to be concerned with accuracy and correctness of surface-level features of writing. I was deeply involved in the practice of searching for and calling attention to error. My teachers and I had overused correction and created an emphasis on weakness, error and inability. We had also neglected one of Andrea Nash's points in her discussion of redefining learning and teaching: "...make learners conscious of their own strategies for determining correctness" (1992, 68).

Discovering the Process of Discoveries

I had always assumed that learning to write depended upon the application and mastery of rules and prescriptions. Never had I dared to tell myself and my teachers what poor models we were, and how imprecise and vague we had been when attempting to communicate with students. I had suspected what Zamel observed (1985). First, that texts evolve. Second, that revision should be taken literally as a process of reseeing text. Third, that such a process is an integral aspect of writing. Fourth, that we teachers should react as genuine and interested readers of authors, rather than as cold judges and evaluators of student writing.

In the end, the shower of challenging thoughts soaked in and led me to appreciate the process of discovering the process of discoveries, and to realize that it had been personal, even confidential as well. The students had exposed an almost intimate side of themselves, and their writing had improved as a result. That realization was well worth the time I had spent on reading and rereading my students' writings as well as the works of the scholars and educators who have deeply influenced me. It is to both these students and scholars that I owe a debt of gratitude.

APPENDIX 1: WRITINGS BY C.V. IRIBARREN

A-1. Prose: "Last Meeting in Prague"

Our last meeting in Prague, before my returning home. It was late spring or early summer, with Vivaldi or Myslivechek easily flowing from the wireless. On the table, my last sip of milk with slices of stage black bread in the sun's rays. And me, on my back, taking stock of my recently past time all messed up, twisting and spinning round crazily together with my rumbling bowels. Languid, I neither answered nor got up when the muggy air was pierced by a tapping on the door.

The unseen, unexpected, delicate hand on the other side knocked...and again, then cautiously turned the door handle and pushed. The door curiously moved open and produced a figure scrupulously stepping in. As though a second sunrise, her warming, charming, slender person appeared and brightened up the place, her blond hair and blue eyes sparkling, feeding up the light. I uttered her name in surprise, delight–despair perhaps.

The strings and the flute swallowed up the continuo. Her smile overflowed in allegro.

A-2. Transformation into Poetry of "Last Meeting in Prague"

Last meeting in Prague–
Late spring or early summer,
Vivaldi easily flowing from the wireless.

On the table, in the sun's rays, my last
sip of milk and slice of stale black bread.

On my back, taking stock of my recent past
–twisting and spinning round crazily together with my rumbling bowels–
I lay languid, when the muggy air was pierced by a tapping on the door.

On the other side, the unseen, unexpected, delicate hand knocked
and cautiously turned the door handle and pushed.
The door moved open and produced a figure scrupulously stepping in.

Her warming, charming, slender person appeared,
and brightened up the place,
her blond hair and blue eyes sparkling, feeding up the light.
I uttered her name in surprise, delight–despair perhaps.

The strings and the flute swallowed up the continuo.
Her smile overflowed in allegro.

B-1. Prose: "Summer Morning in the Caribbean"

In the Caribbean and the early hours of a summer morning, a balmy breeze waltzes sideways and soothingly the sea laps on the wooden hull of a boat adrift. Lines and sun rays pour in the blue, deep, over which statuesque clouds glide heading for the mountains far ahead.

In the boat, around their captor's bare feet, fish lie still, open-mouthed in their last cry, unheard cry for breath. Ceremoniously, at the rhythm of his favorite song that he hums ceaselessly, the fisherman eats his meal–sea biscuits and coffee–as his eyes scrutinize the distant shore and his mind muses upon his beloved, their past and future.

B-2. Transformation into Poetry of "Summer Morning in the Caribbean"

The Caribbean in the early hours of a summer morning
soothingly the sea laps on the hull of a boat adrift.
Lines and sun rays pour in the blue, deep.

A balmy breeze rises, waltzes sideways,
and clouds glide above, ashore–
heading for the mountains far ahead.

In the boat, around their captor's bare feet,
fish lie still, open-mouthed in their last,
unheard cry for breath.

Ceremoniously, humming tirelessly his favorite song,
the fisherman has his sea biscuits and coffee,
as his eyes scrutinize the distant shore
and his mind muses upon his beloved, their past and future.

C-1. Prose: "Skin Diving"

Writing is like skin diving. You dive into a mass–or a mess of silence, odorlessness, invisible streams, increasing darkness, of drastic, unexpected changes of temperature, of things looking larger and closer.

You strive to reach the bottom, and you reach it. Then you have little time left. You need fresh air. You must get back so you could come back later, back to that glistening piece you don't know yet what it is, to touch it, or simply to behold it longer.

C-2. Transformation into Poetry of "Skin Diving"

Writing's like skin diving.
You dive into a mass–
or a mess
of silence,
odorlessness,
invisible streams,
increasing darkness,
of drastic, unexpected changes of temperature,
of things looking closer, larger.

You push to reach the bottom,
and you reach it.

Then you have little time left–
you need fresh air.

You take it and are back to that glistening thing
you don't know yet what it is,
you want to hold,
or, simply, behold longer.

APPENDIX 2: SAMPLES OF STUDENTS' COMMENTS ON PROSE "LAST MEETING IN PRAGUE"

In fact, I did not understand the excerpt very well but I think it was the last meeting between them, and he was caught by her spell forever. It is full of adjectives, what I don't like, but the author has used them very well so that the lecture does not seem that boring.

Azaria

The excerpt gives the impression the author is telling his best friend about the last time he saw the woman he loves. I think it was an impossible love and that's why he was that surprised when he saw her in his room.

Lizzi

When I started reading this melancholic excerpt I felt like passing through the author's feelings. He is describing one or perhaps the most marvelous moment of his life and he has got into reader's mind and emotions. For him this last meeting meant life, light, everything. I really liked it.

Isabel

Even though there are many words I couldn't get, it's a pretty excerpt that shows how lonliness helps hearts to remember actions that happened and I think remembrances are necessary for human beings as a kind of feed-back and it makes minds grow stronger.

Ivelises

APPENDIX 3: SAMPLES OF STUDENTS WRITING AS EDITORS: FIRST VERSIONS

Within the five given articles we selected the last one to be published because it describes writing as a confused mixture of feelings and thoughts that suddenly come to your mind, as an unknown darkness that you have to explore; like a part of you that is claiming for freedom but you need to hold for surviving. We think the other articles are not good enough for being included in our publication because they are too boring for catching the reader's attention. Besides, the language is very complicated for the readers to understand.

Azaria and Lizzi

Out of the five choices, the description of a summer day in the Caribbean–expressed in two paragraphs–shows that the form doesn't matter when you want to talk about a simple fishing day in a poetic way. It is a continuous description full of adjectives that launches the reader to go deeper into the reading. It is a very precise piece where the author just uses a few, proper words.

The last piece, about the process of writing, did really impress me. Have you ever gone through the deepest of your soul and emotions? That is what you will read. A travel through your internal darkness and mystery.

Isabel and Eyre

APPENDIX 4: SAMPLES OF STUDENTS WRITING AS EDITORS: SECOND VERSIONS

Out of the five given pieces of writing we selected the last one to be published because it describes writing as a confused mixture of feelings and thoughts that suddenly come to your mind, as an unknown darkness that you have to explore; like a part of you that is claiming for freedom but you need to hold for surviving.

We think the other pieces are not good enough for being including in our publication because the language is very complicated for our readers to understand. Besides, they seem too boring for catching the readers' attention. Readers may get lost while reading.

Azaria and Lizzi

I'd publish the last one, the poem about writing, because I think people can pay more attention to poetry than simple paragraphs. I also share the author's opinion when he says writing is like skin diving. You don't know exactly what people think about your writings until they read them. So, you seem to be in danger waiting for something you don't even know: their opinion.

In the paragraph about the Caribbean, everything is described with a fine touch. Summer mornings, the sun, the breeze, the sea and how this calm helps the fisherman to open up his mind to the distance in front of him and to make a stop in his life. My point is that this kind of writings, which make references to nature, relaxes stressed people. That's why this paragraph should be published.

Ivelises

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLES OF STUDENTS WRITING AS EDITORS: FOURTH VERSIONS

To Mr. Smith, Head of the Editorial Board of *Cosmopolitan Magazine*:

I would like you to publicate these two pieces–written by young people–to head your section, **Youth**, for new talents. I think both of them should be known and enjoyed by all those many persons that read your articles.

The description of a summer day in the Caribbean–expressed in two paragraphs–shows that the form doesn't matter when you want to talk about a simple fishing day in a poetic way. It is a continuous description full of adjectives that launches the reader to go deeper into the reading. It is a very precise piece where the author just uses the proper words.

The piece about the process of writing did really impress me. Many authors have given their impression of writing; but not many have written a so expressive poem like this one. Have you ever gone through the deepest of your soul and emotions? That is what you will experience. A travel through your inner darkness and mystery

Isabel and Eyre

To Mr. Williams, head of the editing staff of *People Magazine*:

Mr. Williams, we were given the task of choosing two out of these five pieces of writing. Our choices were the poem about the Caribbean and the poem about writing. The first is about the sea. In this poem the blue and lovely sea is attractively described. It gives us an image about the cozy and quiet environment which will make the readers relax and almost feel as if they were really there enjoying the soft breeze, the sun and the sight.

Our second option was based on the way writing is approached, from that point people can infer that there is always something interesting to say about writing. It simply takes you, brings you back, makes you drift, it moves you. To make a long story short this poem perfectly characterizes what writing is all about.

Yanela and Aynell

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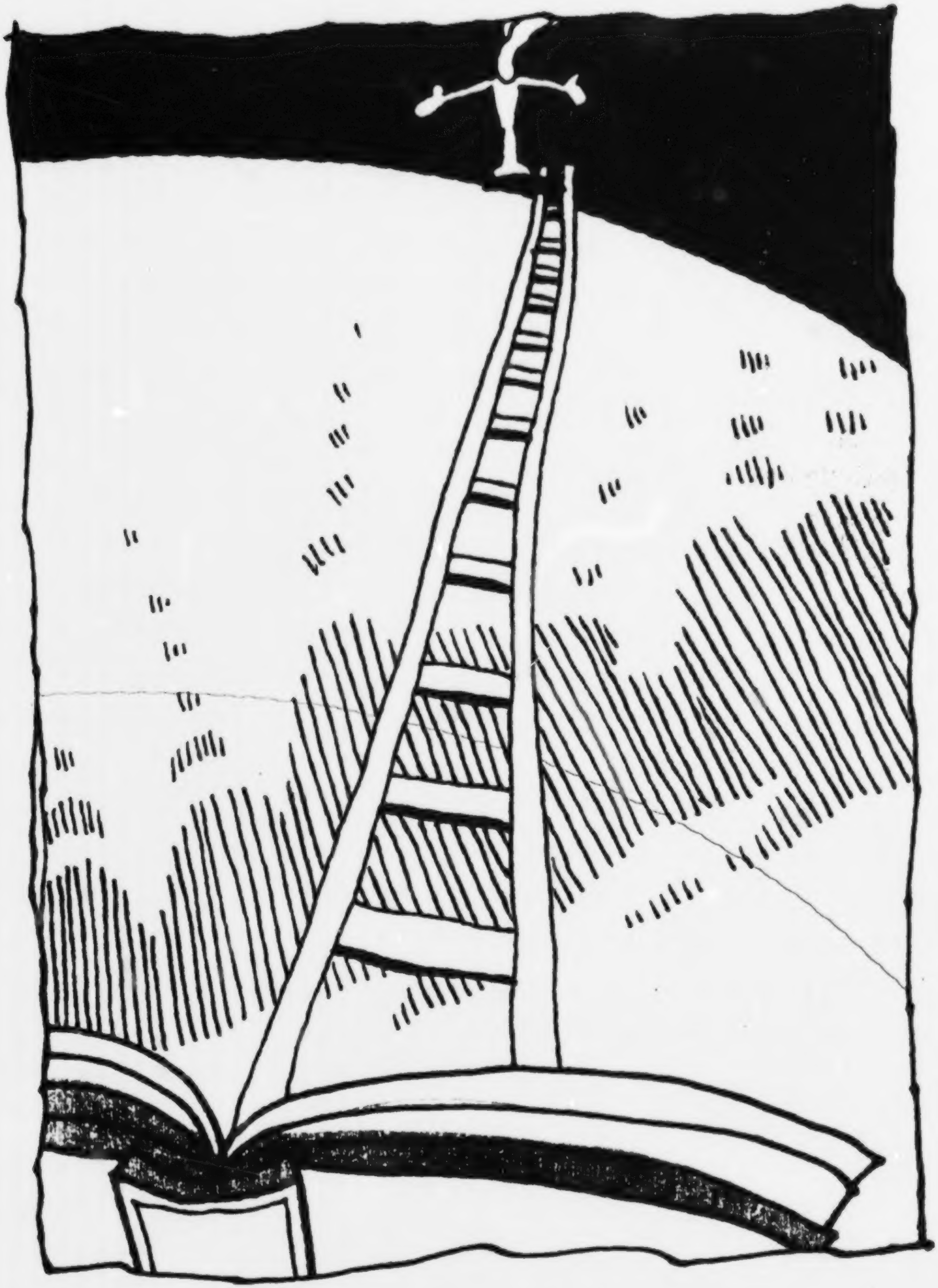

The Alternate Textbook and Teaching English in Ukraine

Olga Kulchytska

Dr. Olga O. Kulchytska is Assistant Professor of English and Chairperson of the English Philology Department at PreCarpathian University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine, where both students and teachers are bilingual speakers of Ukrainian and Russian, and the language of instruction is Ukrainian. In 1996, Dr. Kulchytska conducted research under a Fulbright grant at the University of Illinois, Urbana. With three colleagues (Liubov V. Mykhailiuk, Ella E. Mintsis and Anatolii B. Furda) she has written the book, English Language Teaching in Ukraine: Innovation vs. Tradition, *which she hopes will appear in the near future.*

> *A teacher needs to be willing to negotiate a contract with students rather than impose standards…*
> *A teacher needs to use approaches that enable students to take responsibility for their learning.*
> Ukrainian Graduate Student

These lines from a student's paper echoed questions I had been asking myself:

- *Are teachers and students in Ukraine active partners in seeking knowledge?*
- *Are individual choice and decision-making encouraged in our foreign language classes?*
- *What are the strategies of successful learning?*
- *Is it wise to use western educational techniques in my country?*

The questions led my students and me to create our own materials for advanced English majors, which we call the "Alternative Textbook." In this article, I will be concerned with the pedagogical principles involved, and I will present brief excerpts from the text. I will also provide what amounts to a running commentary by the students themselves. I begin by briefly discussing the social and educational background that resulted in this ongoing endeavor. Although we began this project only in 1996, its seeds were planted quite a bit earlier.

A New Era Begins

In recent years, radical changes have occurred in social, cultural, economic and political life in Ukraine. Change has also been profoundly felt in our educational institutions. This process started with perestroika in 1986, and continued after Ukraine became an independent state in 1991. The country was opened to new radio and TV programs, and to audio courses in foreign languages. Native speakers arrived as foreign language teachers, and new pedagogical ideas, approaches and textbooks were introduced. Prior to democratization, our students were controlled and manipulated by the preplanned and predesigned five-year curriculum of the Ministry of Education. Students were rarely asked for their opinion on foreign language education. They had very little choice, but followed the teacher, the provider of knowledge. Students could speak their minds but seldom did so, since argument presupposes an independence of thought that was not necessary to succeed. To be considered a good student, it was enough to reproduce accurately the contents of a lecture or textbook unit on the exam. The approaches used in this preplanned curriculum did successfully develop students' passive knowledge of the foreign language system. Their comprehension, reading, and speaking skills within certain limited themes were very good. For example, our students found it easier to discuss art than to use everyday language or solve real-world tasks in English.

In 1988, Professor S. Nikolaeva of the Kiev State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages spoke about the necessity to abandon the traditional teacher-centered approach. She advocated the humanization and individualization of the educational enterprise. This vision was shared by American colleagues who spoke in Kiev in 1993, at the American-Ukrainian Symposium on Curriculum Reform in Education. Nevertheless, things did not change overnight. Although today almost all our teachers use some role playing, panel discussion, and similar techniques in the classroom, the old traditions are still very strong. Students have also had to make adjustments to new ways of teaching: sometimes they say they would rather "be taught" than "play games," indicating their feeling that the new approaches do not seem like work, so they must not really be learning.

Deficiencies in the Typical Classroom

In a typical English classroom in Ukraine, teaching is organized by topics, such as education, art, sports, etc. Students read adapted texts on these topics in the first year, and authentic ones in years 2–5. Each text is followed by drills and communicative tasks. The classroom techniques used in Ukraine vary from static grammar and vocabulary drills, to pseudo-communicative tasks (e.g., dramatization of take-home dialogs and text interpretation), to communicative activities (group work, role playing, panel discussions). The materials used are for the most part authentic; the tasks assigned engage students in vocabulary drills and textual interpretation, in using the text as a source of information, and in target language communication. However, the "communicative" situations are preset, student roles are preordained, the vocabulary is obligatory, and the information provided by the textbook is sometimes not sufficient to perform some of the tasks required. This approach is not effective in developing communicative skills, as the emphasis is placed on pedagogical tasks. There is no need for communicative use of the target language, because no problems are posed and no real information is exchanged

As an alternative to the traditional method, Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) appealed to me and my colleagues in Ukraine. TBLT advocates self-motivated change, where students and teachers themselves propose solutions to problems. Language instruction is not organized around grammatical structures, but instead around problems to be solved (Markee 1997). The basic idea in TBLT is that communication occurs when there is a gap in the information that is available to the participants in a conversation: one participant must obtain missing information from another. The absence of an information gap (as in "act-out-a-dialog" tasks) leads to pseudo-communication, using the language to demonstrate one's ability to do so and not for real communication.

Foreign broadcasts find their way into the textbooks that students write.

A Modest Proposal: Suggested Themes for the "Alternative Textbook"

In 1996, when I first proposed to my class of fifteen undergraduate advanced English students that we write an Alternative Textbook, they were not enthusiastic. Most considered this project just another assignment that would make their lives miserable. Despite their discouraging behavior, I decided to give them a free hand in choosing themes, texts, issues for discussion. All the creative work would be theirs, and I would just be the administrator. Something amazing happened when I said, "Don't pick topics for teachers—you are going to write this textbook for yourselves and for the next few generations of students." My inert students started naming issues I had never suspected they were interested in. Their list was long, more than I had expected and far more than they could complete in a year. They voted for the best of all the themes named and arrived at the following final list:

1. *The Individual and Society*
    - *a. Alcoholism, Smoking, Drug Abuse*
    - *b. AIDS*
2. *People's Values*
3. *Human Rights*
4. *The World after World War II*
5. *Careers*
6. *Man and Nature*
7. *Youth Culture*
8. *Women and Society*
9. *The Art of Love*

Unit Structure

Using a few American textbooks as models, I chose two students to assist me in designing a unit structure that would emphasize communicative tasks. We presented our schema for class discussion; it was adopted after some revision. The 1997–98 class continued working on the unit structure, a modified version of which appears below:

- *1. Dilemma*
- *2. Facts and Figures*
- *3. Conversational English*
- *4. Text work*
    - *4.1. Text*
    - *4.2. Vocabulary items*
    - *4.3. Words and definitions*
    - *4.4. True/false statements*
    - *4.5. Matching ideas*
    - *4.6. Translation drills*
    - *4.7. Literary translation*
- *5. Communication Activities*
    - *5.1. Discussion*
    - *5.2. What's the difference?*
    - *5.3. Role playing*
    - *5.4. Essay writing*

Next, the class split into smaller teams of two to four students, each working on one or two of the themes. The choice of partners and themes was voluntary. I was proud of my students: they showed a maturity of thought and seriousness of intent that we teachers sometimes deny they have. Ten or fifteen years ago, Ukrainian students would not have selected such topics (The Art of Love, Drug Abuse) in a teacher's presence; they would have been less open-minded (AIDS, Women and Society), less concerned about problems of individuals (Human Rights), less pragmatic (Careers) and less imaginative.

Below are excerpts from a sample unit of the Alternative Textbook we created. All the texts used are authentic, and a unit's authors can change the basic structure shown above. Some of the tasks in the unit are communicative and involve exchange of information or ideas; others are purely academic. But even in the latter, we encourage students to check with a partner, to report results, to team up in groups and compare answers. The Alternative Textbook is built on a student-student, not teacher-student interaction. Our work is a self-educating project. When a unit is ready, the team of authors (i.e., students) introduces it to the class and performs as teachers. The authors know their texts; they feel at home with their translations, role playing and other tasks. The students are the suppliers of new teaching materials, the implementers of innovation, and the clients of the project.

Excerpts from a Sample Unit on AIDS

(Team of authors: Ira Ustenko, Vika Lysenko, Ivanna Dvoliatyk and Oksana Mytskan, all members of the graduating class of 1997.)

> **1. Dilemma.** Ryan White is one of those kids who became a victim of AIDS. In December 1984, he was infected through a blood transfusion. The doctors said that it would be his last Christmas. Later he felt better and wanted to go back to school. But he wasn't allowed to, because he was considered dangerous. His classmates' parents held a meeting and demanded his isolation.
>
> *Imagine that an AIDS-infected person came to study in your class. How would you treat him (her)? Explain and justify your choice.*
>
> *A. You would try to support him, though AIDS is dangerous.*
> *B. You would avoid contact with him because AIDS is dangerous.*
> *C. You would demand his isolation because AIDS presents a serious threat to the community.*

The Dilemma section is a brainstorming activity, a story posing a problem–the question is to be discussed rather than answered. "Dilemma is useful and important," noted one student, Liuba Ziniuk: "The short text catches the reader's attention, evokes her curiosity and make her want to read more." Mariana Gresko added, "Dilemma gives you the key to understanding the whole unit."

2. Facts and Figures. Use the following facts to ask your partner what he or she thinks about AIDS. What do you know about AIDS/HIV? Is the problem worth your attention? Why? Does it concern you? Is the disease less threatening for people living in Europe?

—Almost 111,000 Americans have been diagnosed with the disease, and no one has yet been cured…
—AIDS cases are heavily concentrated in major cities. Ethnic minorities are disproportionately represented: among white adults, the incidence of AIDS cases is 189 per million population, for Afro-Americans it is 578 per million, and for Latinos, 564 per million…
—One out of every five AIDS patients has no insurance at all.

People's Daily World, *Nov. 30, 1989*

"Facts and Figures" supplies snapshot information for comment on the topic at hand; students find additional facts from other sources for class. Every student suggests a question related to Facts and Figures and presents it for further discussion. Ira Kutsii, one of the authors of the unit "Alcoholism, Smoking and Drug Abuse," said, "I was shocked by the figures, because I had no idea how many people in the world have a drinking problem. These figures make us think about what we are doing with our lives."

3. Conversational English. Study the following expressions. Advise someone who is worried and unhappy not to panic, to see a doctor, to have a blood test. Suggest other situations for the expressions above. Role-play a talk between Ryan White's classmates.

Advice: Why don't you…?
If I were you, I'd…/ I wouldn't…
I think you should…/ I don't think you should…

Distress:
A. What's the matter?
What's wrong?
What's the problem?…
B. I am worried.
I'm rather/ very/ terribly/ dreadfully worried.
I've got a lot of problems…

The Conversational English section is meant for self-education. It is a take-home task: students memorize the idioms and use them in improvised situations or in a conversation. This is quite a traditional technique in my country, as English is a foreign, not a second language for us. Some of my students find this task difficult: "We just skipped it, because we could not think of appropriate conversational patterns related to the subject" (Natasha Shaturma).

4. Text Work.

4.1. Text A. Read the following text carefully: Give a brief summary of the text. What is the author's point? Do you consider the information useful? How can it help fighting AIDS? Is it worth knowing the history of disease if it is incurable? In groups, compare your answer with those of your partners. Did you have the same ideas?

AIDS is the final, life-threatening stage of infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). AIDS stands for acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. The name refers to the fact that HIV severely damages the patient's disease-fighting immune system. Cases of AIDS were first identified in 1981 in the U.S.…Although HIV is primarily transmitted through sexual intercourse, it can also be transmitted through infected blood…There is no vaccine against HIV, and we have no effective treatment of AIDS once it develops….

The World Book Encyclopedia, *1993.*

Reading texts aloud is very popular with our students and teachers, though it is not a communicative activity. We teach our students expressive reading just as students in other countries might study drama. And reading for comprehension is "the most important part of every unit. The text is its backbone" (Mariana

Havrylovych). Another student noted: "We looked through tons of books and magazines, trying to find the best text for our unit. As a result, we know much more now!" (Yuri Dranchuk).

4.2. Vocabulary. Reproduce the following vocabulary items in context. Give their Ukrainian equivalents. Report the results. In class, choose the best variants.

disease-fighting
to transmit the virus...
to slow the progress of disease
to damage the immune system

Dr. Kulchytska (right) often lets students participate in decisions about what they will study.

Memorizing vocabulary is less enjoyable than reading for comprehension or discussion; providing Ukrainian equivalents is more creative. Only three students did think we should study the text's vocabulary. Mila Telegina notes: "Learning vocabulary items is of great importance, as every text has an abundance of new words and phrases. Some of them name things which we don't have in our culture, which are impossible to understand out of context. It is also impossible to understand a text if we don't know them."

The exercises in the following section go with Text B, "AIDS and Our Health Crisis," by Chuck Johnson (*People's Daily World* 1992), which is not presented here.

4.3. Match the verbs with their definitions:

1. to jeopardize
2. to assault
3. to decimate
4. to expose
5. to prevent

A. to stop or hinder
B. to kill or destroy a large part
C. to make an attack (by a sudden rush)
D. to imperil, to expose, venture
E. to leave uncovered, unprotected

Explain these words: AIDS, HIV, virus, vaccine, prejudice, to infect, devastation, awareness, tolerance. *Compare your definitions with your partner's.*

As for providing words with definitions, some students find it "new and interesting" (Ivanna Dvoliatyk), or "difficult, because sometimes you think you know a word, but cannot explain what exactly it means" (Natalka Duma). Others consider this task "too simple for advanced students; it does not help one to memorize the words" (Liuba Ziniuk).

The exercises in the following two sections accompany Text C, "An Epidemic of Inaction," by Andreas E. Laras (*People's Daily World* 1989), which is not presented here.

4.4. Which of these sentences about Text C are true and which are false?

—Governmental structures are able to provide immediate and adequate response to the AIDS crisis.
—AIDS poses no real threat to society.
—The law does not prohibit employment of people with AIDS.

My students think that true/false statements are important. They consider them difficult because such tasks were very seldom given in the old educational system.

4.5. Find the ideas in Text C that match each statement below:

—Grassroots organizations are the only ones conducting educational campaigns.
—Discussions about human relations and sexuality were previously considered taboo.

Matching ideas aims at developing the ability to grasp essential information. Student opinions differed as to the usefulness of the match-the-ideas task. It was called "vague," "incomprehensible," "original," "challenging," and "tricky." Mariana Pshehotska thinks "it helps you to learn how to concentrate on the main points of the text."

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4.6. Translate the following sentences from Ukrainian into English, *using the vocabulary of Texts A, B and C.* [The Ukrainian sentences were omitted here.] *Team up with two more students and compare your translations. Choose the best variant.*

The Old Versus the New

We had the most heated arguments about this translation task. One of the students, Ira Gula, opposed it so resolutely that the rest nearly gave in. As a participant in the 1,000/1,000 Program established in 1992 by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev, she spent a year studying English at Illinois College in Jacksonville in 1995/96, and this had given her new ideas and priorities. She said: "Drills are effective during the first two years of foreign language study. For advanced students, the main task is to study how to learn and develop, not to memorize or accumulate knowledge." The opinion of the majority was expressed by Ira Ustenko: "Some think that drills and translation exercises are not necessary, but drills help me. We don't have many native speakers around, and we don't have computer-assisted English classes. So I think we need the translation tasks and drills."

The text that evolves is dynamic, contemporary and well organized.

I also expressed my view during the translation debate: I am in favor of including translation in the Alternative Textbook. Translation is a high-level technical skill, without which the majority of our graduates will never find a job in Ukraine. Many will work as translators and interpreters for private firms, joint ventures, the state administration or publishing houses. They have to know exact Ukrainian equivalents for English words. The translation of fiction and scientific texts, vocabulary translation and grammar translation tasks were and still are required in our university foreign language curriculum. In the textbook currently used, they constitute about 10% of all exercises, and our students are given translation tests once a month. I am glad that my students voted to keep a reasonable amount of traditional work in the Alternative Textbook. This was a conscious decision on their part to preserve what was useful in the old system and what may be important for their future careers.

4.7. Translate Text C into Ukrainian. *In groups, compare your translations and work on the final version.*

This type of translation task really appeals to my students. Ira Dubynska said: "When I translate a text I feel like a co-author. Each language has its own laws, and my task is to render the author's message using a different language, and to make my text look and sound both right and beautiful." The students enjoyed collaborating on a final version.

5. Communication Activities.

5.1. Discussion. *Work in groups to name the issues highlighted in the texts. What do you know about the AIDS problem now?…Can you produce examples—stories, facts, etc.—to illustrate each issue of your discussion? Some ways of fighting AIDS are: sex education, anti-drug campaigns—Suggest other possible ways of solving the problem.*

5.2. What's the difference? *In small groups, compare the AIDS situation in the USA with that in your country. Points of comparison: attitude toward HIV-infected people, ways of preventing the spread of infection, difficulties in preventing AIDS. Suggest some other aspects for comparison and discuss them.*

Sections 5.1 and 5.2 are among my students' favorites, because they can speak their minds. "When discussing a problem, I feel at ease and communicate my ideas freely" (Natasha Shaturma); "Discussion involves creative thinking" (Ira Kutsii).

5.3. Role Playing. *Imagine that you are a reporter interviewing people on their attitude toward*

AIDS-infected persons. Improvise three interviews. Think of some more situations and problems to act out.

Role playing is not quite a success with us so far. We are more familiar with "dramatizations," when students first make up a dialog, memorize their parts and then present it in class. There is no improvisation, the words are carefully thought out, the grammar is checked. When speaking impromptu in a role play, my students sometimes feel short on words and ideas. "It is quite different from discussion where one does not have to be amusing or lively. Though it is new for us, I think we should do it, because role play does develop our speaking and performing skills" (Mariana Gresko). Exactly because students do not feel confident in this kind of activity, role playing is included in the Alternative Textbook.

5.4. Essay Writing. *Write an essay on one of these or other issues suggested in the texts and/or discussed in class: your attitude toward HIV/AIDS victims; AIDS in Ukraine; should sex education be introduced in high schools in Ukraine? Present your essay for comments, questions and further discussion.*

Essay writing presents many difficulties. Following East Slavic traditions of organizing information, my students tend to present the message in the last third of their paper. Their syntax and phraseology are not always correct, they have problems with the logical sequencing of main and supporting ideas. "We learned to enjoy essay writing only by the end of the academic year. It shows one's ability to sum up the information, to present it in a logical way. It is important to have one's own ideas and vision" (Tanya Smirnova). Essays are usually presented in class, then the author is open to friendly criticism, praise, advice and comments, both on the content and the structure of the essay.

Success

The success of the Alternative Textbook project is amazing, given that writing their own materials is an extra-curricular activity for my students, since the State's predesigned curriculum cannot be ignored. Creating materials requires time and energy; yet this is how they feel about it:

> *The textbook we are using now is not bad, but it was written long ago. Its themes, texts and language are out-of-date. Language is a living thing, its vocabulary and grammar are changing constantly, and we must take these changes into account.*
>
> Yulia Markiv
>
> *Working on the Alternative Textbook gives us the opportunity to choose themes which are more important and useful than those in the textbook. Besides, it makes us read a lot of authentic texts.*
>
> Natasha Liubushkina
>
> *Writing our own materials is great. It is creative work; we feel responsible for it and try to do our best.*
>
> Natalka Khavuliak

What we need in Ukraine now are new pedagogical materials, new approaches and values. A change in pedagogical values will lead to changes in approach and materials. It makes me proud and happy to observe how the philosophy of both teachers and students is gradually changing. The students have ceased to be "passive objects" and are becoming the center of the educational process. Now we must work on a new methodology that will help educators develop students' creative thinking and ability to acquire knowledge on their own. We must convince educators that there is an alternative to feeding students with facts.

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Editor's note: *Readers can write to Dr. Kulchytska at: English Department, PreCarpathian University, Shevchenko St. 57, Ivano-Frankvisk 284000, Ukraine.*

ESL Student Storytellers as Cultural Diplomats

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Kim Hughes Wilhelm

> ***Listening*** *to stories helps students develop their ability to understand the spoken language, become aware of cultural values different from their own, sharpen their memory skills, develop their ability to predict upcoming actions and events, and discriminate different story genres and storytelling styles.* ***Telling*** *stories provides opportunities for students to speak the foreign language creatively, to integrate information and knowledge they learned from other sources, and to become more self- confident in their ability to express themselves spontaneously.*
>
> James M. Hendrickson (1992)

Adult students in our intensive English program have taken on the roles of storytellers, and their elementary audiences at nearby schools are delighted. The children seem to have become aware of different cultural values and to have gained empathy for non-native speakers of English. Interacting eagerly both during the story and in follow up activities, the youngsters were aware of the limited English proficiency of the storytellers, but communication was positively perceived by both. The exchange was, in fact, enhanced by the children's supplying vocabulary and gently correcting pronunciation.

Although the adults functioned at a low intermediate level (approximate TOEFL range of 400-440), they successfully focused on the goal of teaching about their home countries and took on the roles of global awareness diplomats. They drew upon their own experiences in areas such as family life and schooling to supplement their planned activities and to respond to the children's questions. In this way, they integrated their knowledge and used English creatively and in authentic, information-sharing interactions. Perhaps most importantly, they built their self-confidence and were highly motivated to record their experiences in journal writing and to share them with their classmates and ESL teachers. This was easily seen by comparing their attitudes on the ride to the schools and on the trip back, when they were excited, animated and full of stories about their interactions with the American children.

Impressions

Videos of the school visits were presented during an end-of-term exhibit to other students in the Intensive English Program. These adults were surprisingly confident and eager to speak about their experiences with area television and newspaper reporters who came to interview them. A number of the adult students asked for copies of the videotapes and photographs of the school visits to send to relatives back home. Several commented that this experience was a treasured and unforgettable memory. One student from Taiwan said:

> *I was excited to visit the children and introduce my country. However, when I went to the school, I began to feel nervous because I had never seen so many children looking at me. But during the presentation, I felt more and more comfortable....I often think about the school visit now. I learned how to introduce myself and my country in English. Then I could stand in front of many people to talk about something. That is not learned by me in my country...This is an unforgettable experience.*

The ESL adults were asked, "How much did the school trips help you improve your spoken English?" The majority responded with either "Quite a bit" or "A lot," including such comments as "You must depend on yourself to speak and sometimes to get a new word from the children," and "I can be brave to talk to many people." One commented that "the trip to the school let me talk with a lot of people and now I trust myself to talk and talk. I am confident now." One of the Korean adults commented that the visit "made me nervous... and determined to study English hard. I can't forget this school visit forever." After his first visit to a school, an adult from Panama wrote:

> *Everyone has different kinds of experience in his life. Sometimes those experiences can be bad or good, but school visit #1 has been my favorite. When people are learning a new language, the dream most important to them is demonstrating all that they have learned. Visiting a school and speaking with children is a good way for demonstrating that you really are learning…I think that it is a nice idea that helps the ESL students lose fear to speak with Americans.*

Elementary school teachers commented similarly on the positive interactions and sharing that occurred. For example:

> *The adult visitor—call him "Sam"—had a good story prepared for the children. They enjoyed it and interacted appropriately when Sam asked them questions or requested that they predict what would happen next. The children had a lot of questions to ask and were interested in the answers.*

First Steps in the Project

Orientation to the public library and selection of an appropriate traditional tale from the adult's home country were among the first steps of the project. (Excerpts are provided in the Appendix to suggest the level and content of the stories chosen.) The students then worked in the creative speaking class on pronunciation and presentation skills. They also planned and located props and materials for the cultural activities that they led during final visits to the schools. In the third week of the term, a professional storyteller visited each class to share group management and story-telling techniques. It was obvious that our adult students consciously applied techniques learned from the librarian and the storyteller as they worked on their own performances. As they became more confident, some began to intersperse story telling with story reading.

The adult ESL student (center) has children participate in a dance from her country.

Visits to the Schools

The first visits to the schools were about 30-45 minutes long. Second (and final) visits involved returning to the same classrooms to conduct hands-on cultural activities such as making flags, teaching language, working with maps and geography, playing a game from the adult's country, and trying on traditional clothing. As follow-up, journal writing assignments were made for the adult students: they were to reflect on their own attitudes and feelings about the project. One commented:

> *I thought the children were disobeying their teachers, but really it was vice-versa. I was thinking that the teachers were so strict and impatient, but really I made an error in judgment because the teachers were kind to the children and kept the class from becoming boring. In conclusion, all what I can say is that I'm sorry for my errors in information but nobody can see or mention the differences except if they make a visit like this.*

Back at the University

The TESL professors experimented with ways to debrief their adult students and discuss the school visits for further language development. Typically, two sections were combined for a large meeting after the visits, with adults from one class describing the school they had visited, their presentations, and the atmosphere of the school. Since the two sections had visited different schools and would be going the following week to the other school, this seemed to help them prepare mentally for the visit to the second school. Pictures and video clips were given to each school and also displayed at our Center's end-of-term exhibit of all student work. Some photographs from the visits were included in our web site on the internet. Our address is http://www.siu.edu/~cesl/

Innovations

In this, the third year of implementation, the school visit program continues to improve. The newest idea is to encourage adult students to volunteer as classroom reading partners for the elementary students in the weeks before their first "official" visit. They could take turns reading aloud to a partner while observing and being part of the classroom environment. This would enable them to get to know teachers and students before having to be "on stage" themselves. Another innovation is to ask the elementary school children to write or draw about the experience in the last few minutes of the final visit.

Final Comments from the Adult Students

Global awareness and an interest in the different cultures represented were high on the list of comments from adult students. Some noted cultural similarities. A Taiwanese student said:

> *I thought my country's primary school is different from American primary school before I went there. However, I knew that now it is very similar to my country. What do children like? They like singing, dancing, and playing. All of the children in the world are like them.*

A Korean adult had a somewhat different reaction:

> *Most of all, the atmosphere of the class is very different from Korean schools. The children are more active than Korean children. And it is very strange for me to teach American children about my country....We have very different cultures and have much cultural gap. We don't understand each other sometimes. We have to make effort to learn about other culture.*

A journal entry written by one of the ESL adult students sums up the entire experience:

> *After going to the elementary school, I asked myself what do I think now? I introduced my country to those children successfully. I let them know a lot of things that are happening in Taiwan. I became the communication bridge between Western and Eastern culture. Not only this, but also I have learned something from this trip. I do know that there are a lot of differences between Eastern students and Western students. Those children showed their questions and their opinions a lot more than my country's students do. And I also learned how to perform a speech in front of people bravely. I think this is the biggest thing that I've learned.*
>
> *After I finished this assignment, I know that there are a lot of different cultures which exist in the world. To understand them and to compare with my country culture are a lot of fun. Next week, when I go to another elementary school, I will know how to make my speech better.*

Continents of the World

Young students are eager to learn about other cultures, and the adult students are eager to teach.

Acknowledgements:

Special thanks to Paula Tabor, Projects Coordinator, and to the other teachers who worked so hard on this project. Special thanks as well to the parents, students and principals at Parrish and Lewis Elementary Schools in Carbondale, Illinois, and to members of the International Student Association, librarians at the Carbondale Public Library, and professional storyteller Tom Hughes Wilhelm.

APPENDIX: STORY EXCERPTS

From *The White Crane* (Penguin Books Co. Ltd. Singapore. ISBN: 99751-54-751-1).

Read by an adult ESL student from Japan to second graders:

A long, long time ago, there lived an old man and his wife in a small house in the mountains in Japan. As the old man was walking though the mountains one winter, he suddenly saw a white crane in the distance. Caught in a trap, it was struggling hard to free itself.

"Oh, poor thing! Wait a minute! Here, let me help you...!" said the old man. Gently, he loosened the rope to free the white crane.

"Do be careful! Don't let this happen again!" said the old man as he watched the white crane fly off into the sky.

After a few days, on a cold, wintry night, a young girl came knocking on the old couple's door...*(Continued: the preceding is an excerpt.)*

From *The Turtle Goes Home* by I.D. Kundra (Syarikat Tanisa Sdn. Bhd. Malaysia, 1984. ISBN: 967-99934-1-8). *Read by an adult ESL student from Malaysia to first graders:*

It was early July. It was time for me to go far, far away. It was time to go back to my birth place. It is a beautiful place.

After many days I came to an island. I saw some fish swimming near the island. One small fish told me the name of the island. It is called "Pulau Tenggol." It is an island on the way to Rantau Abang.

I swam to the beautiful island. I saw white sand and coconut trees. The water was very clear. I saw many beautiful fish and corals.

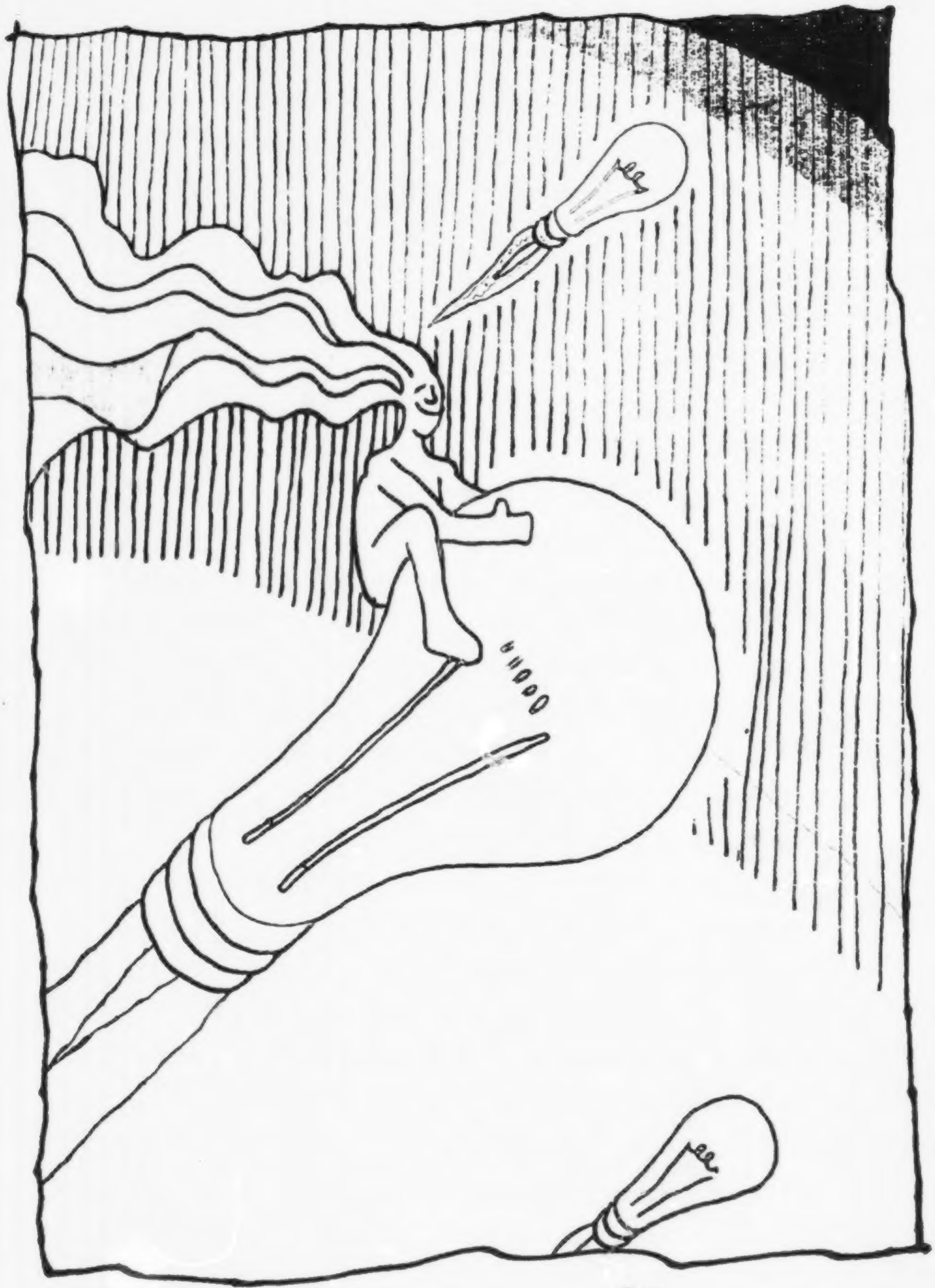
After many hours I knew I was near Rantau Abang. I swam quickly. Then as the water became very shallow, I stopped swimming.

The air was fresh. I took a deep breath. I felt happy and excited.

I started to crawl. I reached the beach. It was night but I was able to see. The moon shone brightly. The beach was sandy. The wind blew sand into my eyes...*(Continued: the preceding is an excerpt.)*

References

Hendrickson, James M. 1992. "Storytelling for Foreign Language Learners." *ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 355 824*, p. 5.



Talking about the Arts in the Writing Class

Gabriel A.J. Yardley is an English instructor at Nanzan University in Nagoya, Japan and likes to use art, music and poetry to motivate learners in his composition classes.

Gabriel Yardley

Integrating writing with oral tasks related to poetry, art and music constitutes an approach that is challenging, but one that can result in a marked improvement in writing. The particular activity I describe in this article usually takes up to two 60-minute periods. It requires students to compare and contrast works in different media that share a similar theme or aspect. I illustrate this general approach by comparing Robert Frost's poem "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" with Peter Bruegel's painting "The Return of the Hunters." Suggestions are also given regarding additional poems, graphics and music that may be used with different kinds of writing, such as descriptive and cause-and-effect essays.

Discourse Markers

I focus on discourse markers–words and phrases that play a specific and important role in writing as well as conversation. For example, "however," "in the same way," and "to conclude" are discourse markers of transition from one idea to another. I maintain that such transitions need to be actively used as part of everyday speech. Why? Because what learners don't speak, they won't write. The incorporating of these markers in the student's conversational lexicon can, I have found, greatly improve elegance and fluency in writing. Many college-level students of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) are acquainted with a large variety of transitions: most of my intermediate Japanese students can recall their syntactic features in detail. Yet they hesitate to use much more than "and," "also," and "but" in either conversation or writing. A number of textbooks present such transitions in lists or boxes and "fill-in-the-blank" exercises; however, the learner is not encouraged to internalize them. This neglect is unfortunate. Hedge (1989) suggests that the instructor's task is to design activities that will support the learner through the process of producing a particular piece of writing. Exercises and materials that go beyond the usual offerings can generate the curiosity and motivation that are essential to language learning.

The Painting and the Poem

To provide basic orientation quickly in the classroom, the color master copy of the painting is placed where everyone has a good view of it. Copies of both painting and poem are distributed to pairs of learners who are asked to consider both works and to make notes on the similarities and differences between them for 15 minutes.[1] Relevant adjectives are listed in the "Summary Box of First Impressions" (Figure 3). This gives specific guidance as to what to look for. Instructors do not need to be experts, although some background reading will enable us to nonchalantly give the impression of knowing a lot about a particular artist or poet and thus making the works more alive and interesting. Art-related vocabulary may also be introduced at this stage as for example, that provided by Thomas in *Advanced Vocabulary and Idiom;* Rooks, *Paragraph Power;* and Wiener, *Creating Compositions.*

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[1] *It may be useful to make an enlarged colour photocopy of the reproduction from a good art book for your own use. Images may also be downloaded from the internet from sites such as:*

http://sunsite.unc.edu/otis/otis.html
http://sgwww.epfl.ch/BERGER/indx.html

Figure 1. The painting: "The Return of the Hunters" by Peter Bruegel[2]

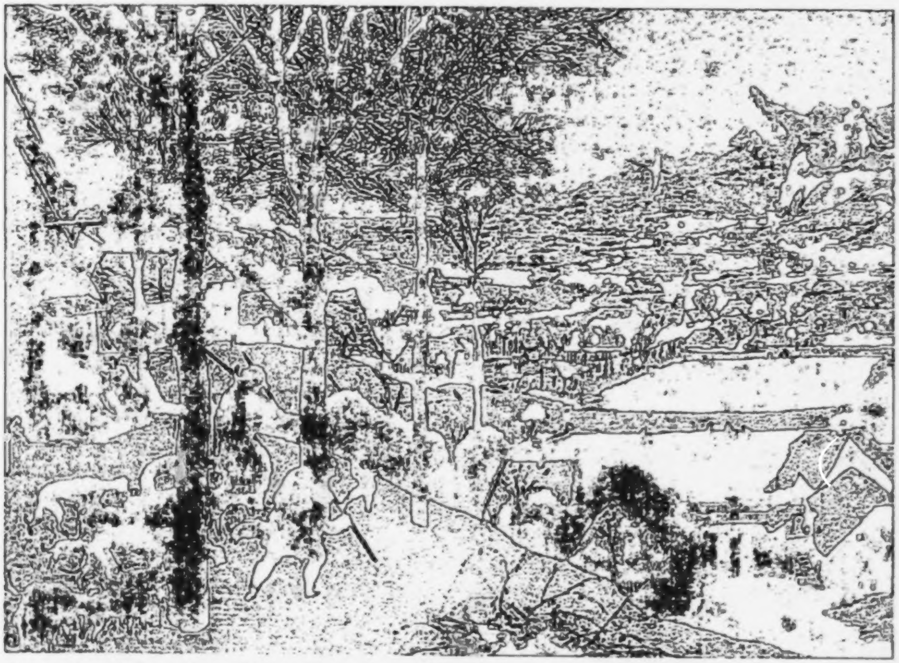

Figure 2. The poem: "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost[3]

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

---

[2] *The illustration of "The Return Of The Hunters" (on display at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna) was downloaded from: http://www.emory.edu/ENGLISH/classes/paintings&poems/winter.jpg*

[3] *Reprinted by permission of Henry Holt and Company, Inc.*

Figure 3. Summary Box of First Impressions

First Impressions	**Bruegel**	**Frost**
Nature	Snow, ice, winter	Snow, ice, winter
Activity	Skating, chopping firewood	Gazing into woods
Landscape	Village and mountains	Forest
Color	Blue, brown, white	Black and white
Time	Late afternoon	Evening
Atmosphere	Lively, noisy	Quiet

After the filling in of the table in Figure 3, learners are asked to orally compare the painting to the poem. What makes it more than just a "spot-the-difference" exercise is the stipulation that each time an item of comparison or contrast is mentioned, a transition from the list in Figure 4 has to be used. Many of the students vied with each other–jokingly at first–to follow my seemingly ridiculous demand that every time they said anything about the painting or poem, the comment was to be preceded by a transition from the list. This activity was successful in generating discourse markers of transition. The high quality art reproductions were essential to the exercise.

Figure 4. Sentence/Clause-Initial Transitions

Comparison	***Contrast***	***Addition***	***Cause-and-Effect***	***Summary***
In the same way	However	Furthermore	Accordingly	All in all
Likewise	In contrast	In addition	As a result	Finally
Similarly	Conversely	Additionally	Consequently	In brief
Compared to	Nevertheless	Moreover	Therefore	In short
Compared with	Even so		Thus	To conclude
	Whereas			
	While			
	On the one hand			
	On the other hand			

Written Work

Following the conversation work, there was a 20 minute free-writing session in which they were to (1) write a 100-word summary comparing the painting and poem, and (2) incorporate and underline at least 10 markers of transition. When the 20 minutes were up, the learners were asked during a further five minutes to (3) exchange their summaries with a partner, and (4) provide appropriate alternatives for all underlined transitions. For homework, the students were asked to do the following: (5) write a 350-word comparison of the painting and poem, (6) observe the usual conventions of essay writing: e.g. appropriate thesis sentence, topic sentence and paragraph structure, (7) use a point-by-point or a block method style for the essay, (8) include at least 40 underlined transitions from Writer's Handbook (McKernan 1991, pp. 142-3), (9) bring two additional photocopies of their essays to the next class (a total of three), and (10) blank out 20 transitions from Copy 2 of their essay.

As Rooks (1988) points out, the following transition markers often accompany the development of a contrast and comparison paragraph as it emphasizes the similarities and differences between the two subjects under discussion (p. 26). The instructor may wish to use the summary exercise and homework assignment to ask learners to produce sentence structure patterns similar to those in Figures 5-7.

Figure 5. Pattern Showing Similarity

Bruegel describes a snow-filled landscape;	**likewise,** **similarly,** **in the same way,**	Frost also dwells on a snowy scene.

Figure 6. Pattern Showing Contrast

A. Bruegel fills his scene with people;	**in constrast,** **contrastingly** **conversely,** **on the other hand,** **however,**	Frost depicts a man and his horse.

B. Bruegel is	**nonetheless** **nevertheless** **however**	**different from** **unlike**	Frost in his description of a winter's eve.

C. **Unlike Frost,** **Different from Frost,**	**nevertheless** **however,**	Bruegel presents a more cheerful end to the day.

Figure 7. Pattern Showing Concession

Despite the fact **In spite of the fact that** **Although** **Even though** **Whereas** **While**	the dogs emphasize companionship, the horse reflects solitude.

Follow-Up

In the following class, before handing in their assignments, students were asked to summarise orally–not read–the contents of their essay, and to incorporate transitions referring to addition summary from the discourse marker list in Figure 4. Copy 2–the one with deletions–was given to a partner who had 10 minutes to suggest a transition for every blank space and an alternative transition for the remaining 20 transitions. On Copy 3, the writer was given five minutes to superimpose (in pencil) "and," "but," "also" or "as well" wherever possible in place of the original transitions. Partners were then asked to compare the transitional changes they had made to Copy 2, and then to read their Copy 3. They were to reflect on the changes and decide which version they liked better. Copy 1 of the essay was collected for marking, and Copy 3 was given to the partner for peer-editing. On being marked, the essays were returned from both instructor and peer editor with comments on a grade sheet.

Surprisingly Apt Usage

Apart from the usual organizational, spelling and grammar errors, it was surprising just how many transitional items were aptly used. A few learners were, however, not aware of semantic nuances and usage of the related expressions "on the contrary" and "on the other hand," and "finally" and "at the end." Still others were confused by the differences between the point-by-point method and the block method of structuring comparative essays. As a final conversation activity, suggested improvements were summarised by the partners using transitions from Figure 4. The essays were re-written and a final version with no underlining turned in for my records.

Sample Essay

Where possible, the instructor should provide learners with an sample essay which they can use for reference. My students received the following short essay as an example for comparison.

A BRIEF COMPARISON OF WORKS BY BRUEGEL AND FROST

(by Gabriel Yardley)

Bruegel's "The Return of the Hunters" and Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"

both *describe a winter's scene. Snow, and the coldness of winter, feature in* **both** *painting and poem; nature is* **also** *a central element.* **In addition, both** *depict a winter's evening which awaits the onset of night.* **Nevertheless, while both** *may have these elements in common, these similarities appear to serve only as a point of departure for poet and artist as they focus on differing aspects of winter, and a number of contrasts which represent this approach may briefly be referred to.*

Professor Yardley (standing) requires students to use many transitions in speaking so that they will be better able to use them in writing.

It is cold, **yet** *there is the warmth of humanity and a feeling of security and companionship in the painting. There are signs of domestic comfort and basic creature comforts.* **Moreover**, *at the ridge of the hill a group of people are roasting a pig; one can almost hear the fire crackling, the birds twittering on the branches and the shouts and laughter of those playing on the ice-covered pond.* **In contrast however**, *in the poem, night is falling and the rider is nowhere near home: no living thing is to be seen or heard except for the bells of the horse:*

> He gives his harness bells a shake
> To ask if there is some mistake.
> The only other sound's the sweep
> Of easy wind and downy flake.

It could be said that these only serve to bring the rider out of his reverie and to remind him that he has far to go. It is **also** *interesting to note that the image of a solitary rider on horseback conveys an image of loneliness. A lone rider is often interpreted as symbolic of rugged independence,* **yet** *as the horse stops "Between woods and frozen lake," the picture is not one of independent man,* **but** *man isolated.* **In contrast**, *the painting depicts a pack of hunting dogs, thus further emphasizing a sense of the companionship, with man's indispensable "best friend," his dog, in evidence. The frozen lake is forbidding and emphasizes the coldness of "The darkest evening of the year." In the painting* **however**, *a frozen river and pond are scenes of diversion and merriment, and here* **too**, *can be seen nature complementing the commotion of life, the stark inactivity of the poem contrasting with the lively and joyful recreation present in the painting.*

Although *the hunters might be tired and weary, they* nevertheless *have warmth, food and rest to look forward to and to spur them on the last few yards.* **Contrastingly**, *in the poem, the rider has stopped, almost mesmerized by the scene stretching out before him as he watches the "Woods fill up with snow." The woods look inviting,* **yet** *he has "promises to keep," band the reader can almost feel the implied weariness and sleepless distance that the rider has to go, in the alternating rhythmic weak-strong stress, of the final two lines: "And miles to go before I sleep/ And miles to go before I sleep." In both we are in the heart of winter, with night soon to fall: in one we witness a homecoming* **while** *in the other, the undertaking of a journey.*

Frost is part of the landscape's solitude, of nature at its loneliest; in Bruegel, nature, as mentioned earlier, is an integral part of various social activities, for example, hunting, skating, and the stoking of a fire. In the poem, **however**, *nature is central to an absence of activity: the "white" and "black" of the "Snowy Evening." Its title may be interpreted as reflecting this absence, and may be said to represent an absence of colour and to be symbolic of nothingness.*

It may **thus** *be said that while these two differing forms of artistic expression depict a winter's scene, the differing approach of both artist and poet create landscapes which,* **while** *sharing certain elements,* **nevertheless** *contrast sharply in both mood and atmosphere.*

Conclusion

A number of texts, such as those by Hedge (1989) and Behrman (1990), do make some use of conversation activities to aid the composing process, yet many only use these activities as a preliminary warm-up, an exchange of ideas and impressions or brainstorming before getting down to the nitty-gritty of writing. Speaking is seen merely as facilitating the collecting of information that will form the basis of what is to be written–not as the very necessary catalyst and complement of the written word. Some learners perceive transitional devices as sets of lexical structures to be used in writing, but rarely to be used in speech. I think that speaking complements writing: if the learner has little practice in using transitional elements orally, it is unlikely that these will be used in writing in a way that approaches a native-like fluency and elegance.

In his introduction to Morgan and Rinvolucri's *Vocabulary* (1986), Alan Maley notes that words are not learned mechanically as little packets of meaning, but associatively. Poetry, music and art can provide the elements that are to be associated in the writing class. They require learners to use their imagination, intuition and feelings in order to go beyond the confines of the cut-and-dried *must* and *must not's* of essay writing. In the activity outlined above, learners are being invited to express feelings or opinions in a spirit of introspective imagination and not stylistic mechanisation. The comparative essay should be the means of describing a developed reaction to a stimulus, and not the end in itself.

Appendix 1:

Additional resources for enhancing rhetorical composition styles. The location of these may be found in Appendix 2.

Structure of Essay	*Art*	*Poetry/Music=M*
Comparison and Contrast	*The Stages Of Life* Caspar Friederich	*Crossing the Bar* A. L. Tennyson
		Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night Dylan Thomas
	The Arnolfini Marriage Jan Van Eyck	*Me, Myself and I* Billie Holliday
	Bratsk, Siberie. 1967 (photo) Elliot Erwitt	*Tonight at Noon* Adrian Henri
Directional Process	*Inventions* W. H. Robinson	*Deaf Donald* Shel Silverstein
Cause and Effect	*Les Amants* Magritte	*Love-40* R. McGough
	Bratsk, Siberie. 1967 (photo) Elliot Erwitt	*Every Breath You Take* (M) Sting
Description	*Bratsk, Siberie. 1967* (photo) Elliot Erwitt	*Love-40* R. McGough
	Cristina's World Andrew Wyeth	*The Land Of The Counterpane* R. L. Stevenson
	The Little Convalescent E. Johnstone	*In the Lap Of the Gods* (M) Alan Parsons' Project

Appendix 2:

Selected resources: The number following each visual or poetry resource in Sections II and IV links it to where it may be found in the Poetry and Art Booklist which constitutes Section I below.

Section I. Poetry and Art Booklist

The Art Book. London: Phaidon Press, 1994.

Boring, Walter. *Hieronymous Bosch*. Cologne: Taschen. 1973.

Doff, Adrian, Chris Jones and Keith Mitchell. *Meanings into Words*. Cambridge: CUP, 1987. (1)

Gardner, Helen, ed. *The New Oxford Book of Verse*. Oxford: OUP, 1990. (2)

Handa, Masao. *Enjoyment of English Poetry*. Tokyo: The Hokuseido Press, 1969.

Henri, Adrian. *The Best of Henri*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1975. **(3)**
Maley, Alan, Alan Duff and Francoise Grellet. *The Mind's Eye*. Cambridge: CUP, 1986. **(4)**
McGough, Roger, ed. *The Kingfisher Book of Comic Verse*. London: Kingfisher Books, 1989. **(5)**
Murata Tatsuo and Norman Angus, eds. *More Poetry Please!* Tokyo: Nan'un-Do, 1990. **(6)**
Silverstein, Shel. *A Light in the Attic*. New York: Harper Collins, 1981. **(7)**
Sky-Peck, Kathryn, ed. *Who Has Seen the Wind?* New York: Rizzoli Int'l Publications, 1991. **(8)**
Viazey, Marina. *100 Masterpieces of Art*. London: Peerage Books, 1989. **(9)**

Section II: Visual Resources

Bruegel, Pieter. *The Return of the Hunter*. **(9)**
Erwitt, Elliot. *Bratsk, Siberie, 1967*. In *Elliot Erwitt*. Paris: Photo Poche, 1988.
Friederich, Casper David. *The Stages of Life*. **(9)**
Johnson, Jonathan Eastman. *The Little Convalescent*. **(8)**
Magritte, R. *Les Amants*. **(4)**
Robinson, W. Heath. *Inventions*. **(1)**
Van Eyck, Jan. *The Arnolfini Marriage*. **(1)**
Wyeth, Andrew. *Christina's World*. **(9)**

Section III: Audio Resources

L'apres midi d' un faun. Claude Debussy.
In the Lap of the Gods. From *Pyramid* by the Alan Parsons' Project.
Every Breath You Take. Sting.
Me, Myself and I. Billie Holliday.

Section IV: Poetry

Crossing the Bar. Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892). **(2)**
Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night. Dylan Thomas (1914-1953). **(2)**
Deaf Donald. Shel Silverstein (1952-). **(7)**
40-Love. Roger McGough (1941-). **(5)**
Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening. Robert Frost (1874-1963). **(6)**
The Land of the Counterpane. R. L. Stevenson (1850-1894). **(8)**
The Night Was Growing Cold. Anonymous. **(8)**
Tonight At Noon. Adrian Henri (1932-). **(3)**

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McKernan, John. 1991. *The Writer's Handbook*, 2nd ed. Fort Worth: Holt, Rhinehart and Wilson.
Morgan, John and Mario Rinvolucri. 1986. *Vocabulary: Resource Books for Teachers*. Oxford: OUP.
Rooks, George M. 1988. *Paragraph Power*. New York: Prentice-Hall.
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Wiener, Harvey S. 1992. *Creating Compositions*, 6th ed. New York: McGraw Hill.

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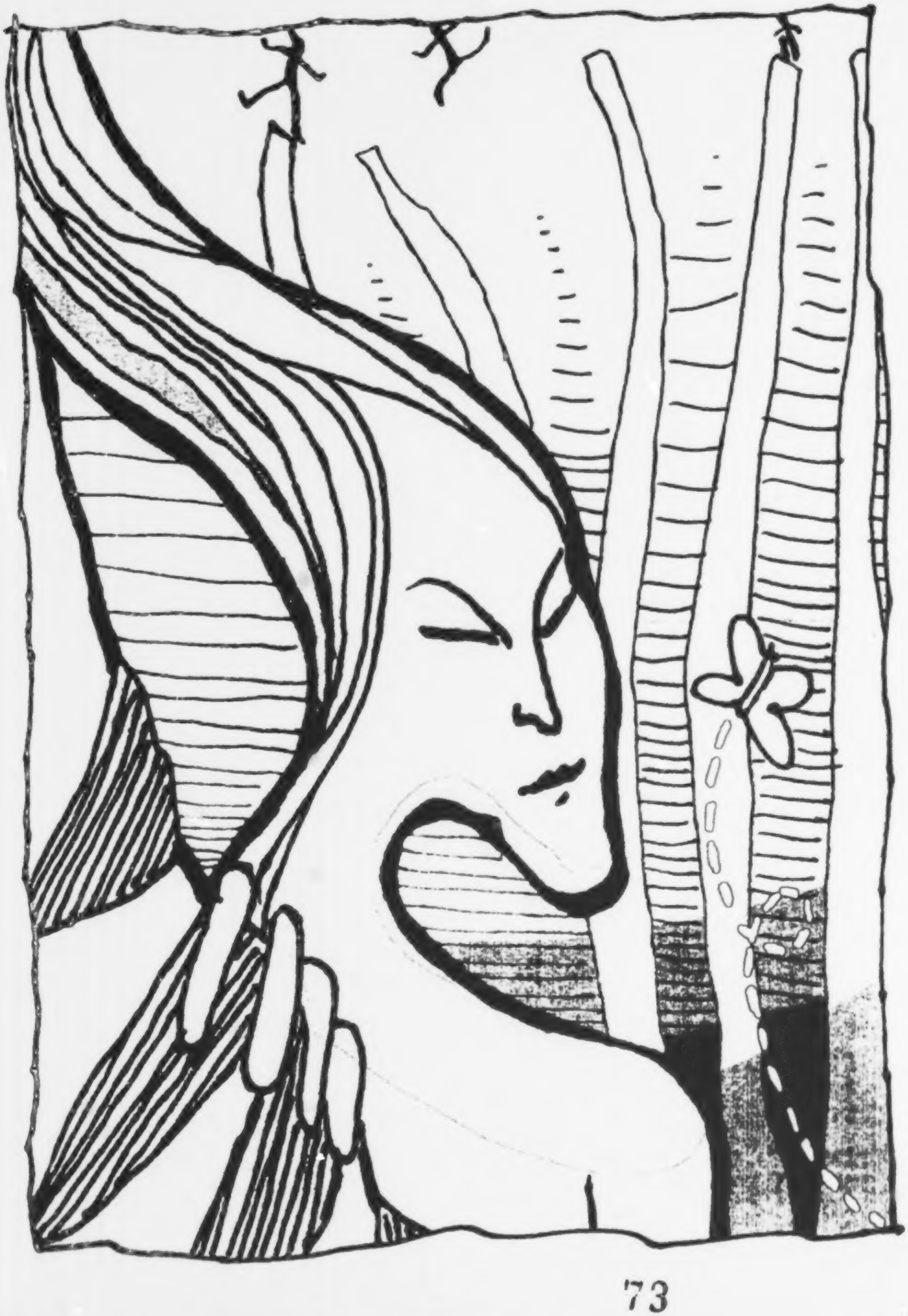

Story Grammars and Oral Fluency

Dafne González

Dafne González is Associate Professor of English at Universidad Simon Bolivar in Caracas, Venezuela. She is involved in the supervision and education of elementary and high school teachers. Her research interests include reading, methodology, evaluation, and content-based instruction. She holds a master's degree in applied linguistics.

> *"No queremos gramática, queremos hablar inglés!"*
> *(We don't want grammar, we want to speak English)*
> Venezuelan High School Student

Promoting oral fluency in EFL contexts is a difficulty faced by teachers at all levels, but it is more evident in elementary and high schools where class size is usually large. Although students develop some listening and reading comprehension abilities, they rarely acquire the ability to speak well and with ease. Since they do not have many opportunities to communicate in the target language, their motivation decreases. The use of stories—narratives and narrative discourse structures—to enhance recall seemed a viable way to increase motivation and promote oral fluency while reinforcing other skills. The first step towards implementing this approach was to convince and train the teachers. In this article, I describe the in-service training program that was designed for seventeen EFL teachers, to get them to use story grammars.[1]

What Are Story Grammars?

Just as a grammar is a way of describing language, so a story grammar is a way of describing a story. All languages have syntax, morphology and phonology, just as stories have settings, themes, plots and resolutions. Story grammars are tools that can be used to increase students' skills in listening to and retelling stories. The description below includes the most important components of the three-session workshop attended by the teachers. Since the process that they went through to discover story grammars was a crucial precursor to their acceptance of the grammars as a useful teaching tool, the reader is asked to follow their search in these pages.

Benefits Shown in Recent Research

Research has shown that the structure of expository and narrative texts can facilitate first and second language readers' recall of events (Carrell 1984, Mandler and Johnson 1977, Meyer 1975, Ross 1986, Thorndyke 1977). Riggenbach (1990) states that discourse analysis techniques "can provide opportunities for learners to engage in real communication while also focusing on form at all levels" (p. 153). Palencia (1997) found that after teaching a story grammar model to a group of elementary school students of English as a foreign language, they not only increased their recall of events, but also their oral fluency. Research has also shown that content-based instruction enhances students' verbal interaction in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (González 1996, 1997).

Objectives

The goal of the program was to motivate teachers to use story grammars in their classes, in order to help students develop oral fluency in English while reinforcing the other skills of the language. This was carried out by helping teachers: (1) to reflect and become aware of (a) the role literature has played in language teaching, (b) the reasons for using literature in EFL, and (c) the use of stories in EFL classrooms; (2) to use story grammars to retell and analyze stories heard or read; (3) to devise methodological guidelines and teaching strategies to use stories and story grammars in their classrooms; and (4) to select, create and adapt their own classroom material.

Session One: The Motivational Power of Stories

While sitting in a semicircle, teachers were asked: "Have you ever seen colored mice?" "Look at the ones in this picture; how many do you see?" "What color are they?" They were asked to brainstorm about the title, *Seven Blind Mice* (Young 1992), in order to predict the content of the story. *Seven Blind Mice* is a fable in which seven colored mice try to identify a strange creature. Each comes with a seemingly unrelated answer until they get together and find that they were describing different parts of an elephant. The moral of the story is that wisdom comes from seeing the whole.

The responses of the teachers were written on a flip chart: "This is the story of seven mice that are blind," "It's the story of how these seven mice became blind," "This story is about seven mice, who after becoming blind, could not see their colors," "It's about seven mice who developed colors after becoming blind!" The teachers began to participate little by little, until everybody had given an opinion. Next, I told the story using the pictures from the book, and changing my voice to impersonate each character. I induced the audience to participate by asking questions. "What do you think the red mouse saw?" They replied, "The leg of an elephant," guided by the book's picture.

"But that was not what the red mouse saw; he saw a pillar!" The teachers laughed. By the end of the story, the teachers were answering questions in chorus.

As post-telling activities, teachers expressed their opinions about *Seven Blind Mice*, its title, its content, its moral, and about their initial predictions. The participants discussed how the meaning of the title was not literal, since the mice were not really blind, but "They could not see the forest for the trees." There were different perspectives about the moral: "Don't give opinions until you know all sides of a problem," "Cooperation is fundamental," "People should work in groups." The teachers were amazed that a children's story had given them so many things to talk about. They discussed how the author had changed the original fable, how small children would be more interested in colored mice, and how the non-literal meaning of the title would be a topic for discussion with adolescents. At this point, the teachers' initial resistance to the training workshops had melted away.

Session Two: The Story Structure Emerges

When the teachers arrived for the next session, they found stories, posters related to stories, and articles on the teaching of narratives. They had the opportunity to look around before the session began. While sitting in a circle, I asked the teachers to think about the books they had examined, and tell me what kinds they were. They said: fables, fairy tales, folk tales and myths. They were asked to write down something they remembered from narratives they had read. Some of the responses were: "Once upon a time…," "A long time ago…," "Once there was/were…," "…and they lived happily ever after," "…they got married and were very happy." It became evident that what they remembered most were the beginnings and endings of stories. The participants noted that there are certain patterns that repeat themselves in stories. This may be self-evident for native speakers, but language learners lack these expressions in the foreign language, which makes it very difficult for them to start telling or retelling a story. By teaching these expressions as wholes, teachers can give L2 students a tool to break the initial shyness that comes with speaking aloud in front of other people, and to graciously close their discourse.

I then told the teachers another story, "The Farmer and His Stubborn Animals" (in Thorndyke 1977). It is about a farmer who had a stubborn donkey. In order to get it into its shed, the farmer had to get the cooperation of other animals. Each animal made a request involving yet another animal. I read it and mimed the different actions. I asked a volunteer to retell the story while the others took notes. Everybody wanted to help the volunteer when she seemed to forget parts of the story. She did not like being interrupted, and complained, "I forget the order of the story if you interrupt. Take your notes and be quiet, please." When she was finished with her version of the story, other participants added parts she had forgotten.

It was at this moment that I introduced the possibility of using storytelling to promote oral fluency by discussing the following quotation: "Getting the class to tell stories should be seen as a fluency-based rather than an accuracy-based activity" (Zaro and Salaberry 1995). Some of the opinions expressed were: "Stories should be used to have students speak and not to correct their grammar," "Remembering all the parts of the story in the correct order is not as important as telling a coherent story," "Students will feel freer to speak because they like to tell stories; stories have a sequence and can be told in short sentences," "What's important is that students use the target language; accuracy is achieved with practice," "When teachers or classmates interrupt to make corrections, students feel inhibited." The teachers recognized that they had made their peer nervous by trying to help her retell the story.

Revisiting the Stories

The teachers were asked to look through the notes they had taken about their peer's retelling of the Farmer's story in order to check the parts she had mentioned and forgotten. She had forgotten the location, the time, the theme and one of the episodes, underlining the notion that a story grammar is "an idealized internal representation of the parts of a typical story and the relationship among those parts" (Mandler and Johnson 1977: 111). Next, I divided the teachers into groups, and asked them to fill in on a handout (Figure 1) what they remembered from the previous session's story, *Seven Blind Mice*.

Figure 1. Handout on Story Summary and Analysis

SEVEN BLIND MICE

Setting: Characters: ____________________
Location: ____________________
Time: ____________________

Theme: Event: ____________________
Goal: ____________________

Plot: Episode 1: Subgoal ____________________
Attempt ____________________
Outcome ____________________

Episode 2: Subgoal ____________________
Attempt ____________________
Outcome ____________________

[...]

Episode 7: Subgoal ____________________
Attempt ____________________
Outcome ____________________

Resolution: Action: ____________________
State: ____________________
Moral: ____________________

Participants concluded that it was easier to remember the story with the outline. They still couldn't remember the order in which the colored mice appeared in the story, but decided that was not important. It *was* important to remember the different episodes, the setting and the resolution; if they had to retell the story, they would have more to talk about. One of the teachers put it this way: "It is like having little cells where you store the information you have heard or read." Providing students with such "maps" will enable them to recall more of a story, which in turn can help them become more fluent (utter more words/sentences with less and shorter pauses). We discussed whether this idealized structure was something that we had to learn or if it was innate. The conclusion was that we probably have some unconscious knowledge, developed through all the stories we are read or told in childhood. Only after seeing the model did the teachers understand that most stories have the same basic structure. We concluded that stories have their own discourse pattern and that students should learn these patterns.

In groups of three, the teachers were given a jig-saw reading of "The Fox and the Crow," a simplified version of Aesop's fable (Holt, Chips and Wallace 1991). In that story, a crow drops its food to the floor while paying attention to the beautiful compliments of a clever fox. The moral is that he who listens to flattery for-gets everything else. The teachers were asked to read the pieces, place them in the correct order, and analyze the story structure. During this activity, the teachers were inductively learning a different way to present stories in their own classes. Each group presented the analyzed story, and the whole group then arrived at a new composite analysis:

Figure 2: Story Grammar Handout Completed

THE FOX AND THE CROW

Setting:	Characters:	Fox and Crow		
	Location:	Forest		
	Time:	Once Upon a Time		
Theme:	Event:	Crow found cheese, put it in mouth, flew up to tree		
	Goal:	(Implied) To eat the cheese		
Plot:	Episode 1			
	Character	*Subgoal*	*Attempt*	*Outcome*
	Fox	Get the cheese	Flatters Crow	Gets cheese
	Crow	Sings	Opens mouth	Cheese drops
Resolution:	Action:	Fox eats the cheese		
	State:	Fox is happy		
	Moral:	Crow learned a lesson		

To sum up the teachers' understanding of story grammars, they were asked to design a graphic organizer that could be given to students to be used with any story they read. In Figure 3 is their graphic.

Figure 3: Story Grammar Model

Setting	+	**Theme**	+	**Episodes**	+	**Resolution**
Characters		Goal		Subgoal		Actions
Place		Event		Problem		Feelings
Time				Steps to solve it		Moral
				Outcome		

Chatting over Coffee

In the final activity of Session Two, each group was given a different story to read. When finished, each group took a turn retelling its story. Using the graphic the class had just designed, the listeners checked whether any part of the story structure was missing. Later, while having coffee, teachers shared their experience as storytellers and listeners. They felt it was easy to remember the top structures as a mental outline for their retelling. As a matter of fact, nobody forgot to mention setting, theme and resolution; main episodes were also easily remembered. This kind of activity is especially suitable for large classes, where it is difficult to give all students the opportunity to speak. Retelling stories in pairs or small groups is a viable and motivating alternative.

Session Three: Application of New Knowledge

In this session, teachers were asked to sum up their learning and prepare to apply it in their classrooms. They noted: "If story grammars help us remember what we have heard or read, they may help our students retain the contents of a story, so that they have more things to say when retelling it." And, "The more elements they remember, the more they will speak." Teachers were divided into elementary and high school groups. Each group produced a detailed list of activities and procedures appropriate for students at the level they taught. These lists were shared among groups and led to the creation of general methodological guidelines. Each class includes four major phases: **Motivation, Presentation, Practice,** and **Evaluation.**

The **motivation phase** consists of prereading activities to introduce a story to students. Realia, visuals, mimics and questions are recommended to introduce new vocabulary and activate students' background knowledge. In the **presentation phase**, the teacher tells the story using visuals and body language. Stories from different cultures should be used to give students the opportunity to discuss values and beliefs. Students are asked to retell the story, or to add what others have forgotten. Next, the teacher questions the class about beginnings and ends of stories, and introduces story grammars using visuals. Finally, students are asked to relate each part of the story they have been told to the different parts of the story grammar.

In the **practice phase**, students (in groups or pairs) complete story grammar maps for different stories and use them to retell the stories. Students check their peers while they retell the stories. Teachers need to be flexible with errors and mistakes; students should not be interrupted during their retelling for linguistic corrections. In the **evaluation phase**, students assess themselves and their peers (through the use of rubrics or checklists; portfolios are recommended to keep students' records). These methodological guidelines served as the point of departure for a whole language project that was implemented in the 7th grade sections of the school (González 1998). In the other grades, teachers also incorporated story grammars and retelling activities when using stories.

Conclusion

This teacher training program enabled trainees to become owners of their own knowledge. The participants learned about language acquisition, literature, and the relation between them. Most importantly, different grouping techniques, activities and classroom management techniques were modeled. The teachers used what they had experienced to develop a practical methodology for their classes. This methodology is now being tested to discover the effects of story grammars on EFL students' oral fluency. Some of the teachers summarized the immediate results that they have perceived: "Students feel more motivated to speak; they are always asking when the next story class will be," and "They make copies of the stories to finish reading at home." Any reader who might be interested in trying out this approach or simply in corresponding is invited to get in touch with the author at the Universidad Simon Bolivar; Departmento de Idiomas; Edif. Estudios Generales, Piso 2; Sartenejas, Baruta; Caracas, Venezuela.

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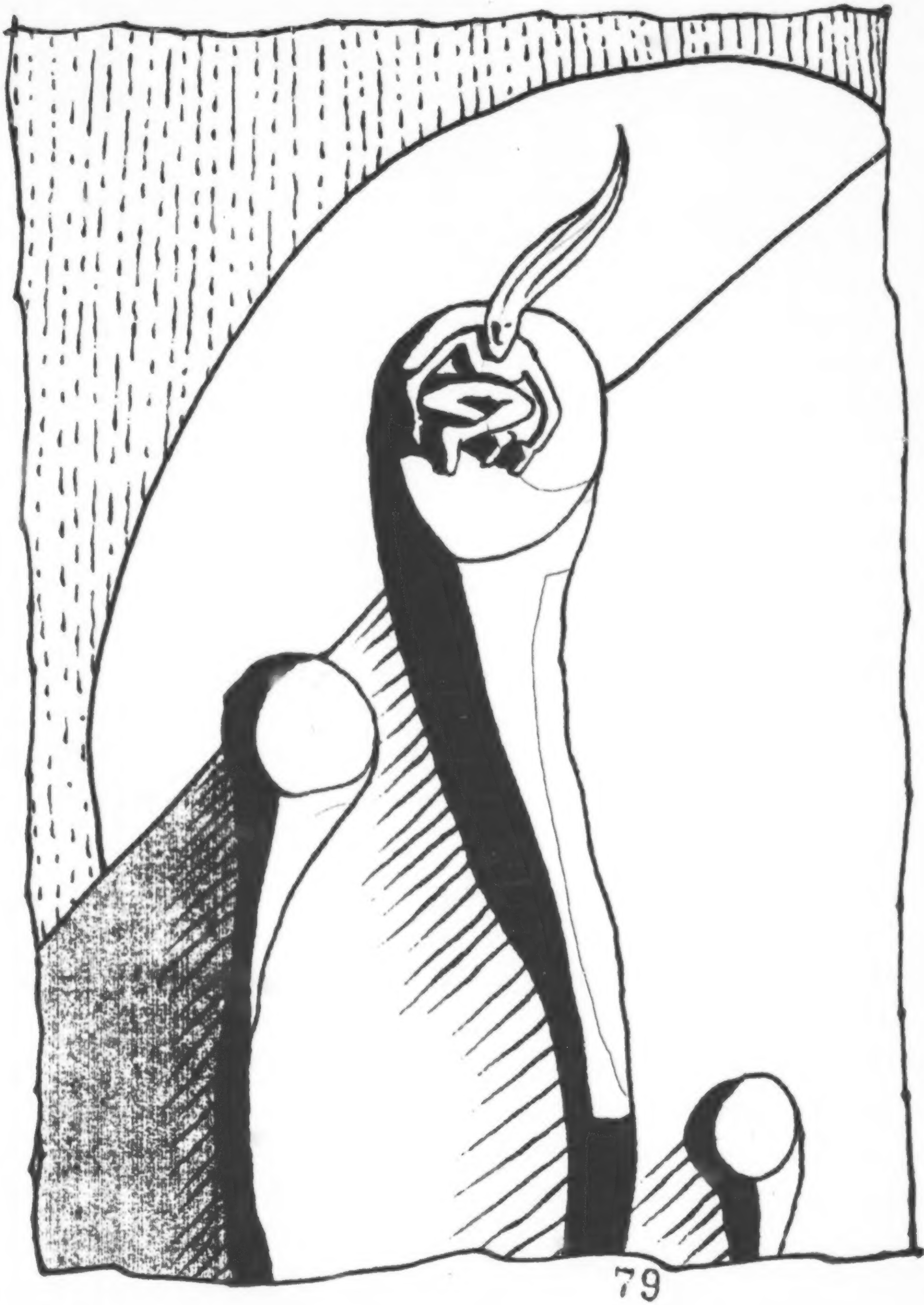

Student-Written Tests: An Effective Twist in Teaching Language

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Lionel M. Kaufman, Jr.

Introduction

Turning the test-taker into a test-maker can transform the process into an imaginative, exciting game involving both student and teacher. Each tries to outguess the other's visions of the course, their "hidden agendas"! In this "game," you're trying to "psych out" the teacher and your classmates in writing your own test items while they're writing theirs. You're asking yourself: "Should I make it easy or difficult?" "What kind of questions will the teacher ask?" "What are my classmates thinking and writing?" Later, in the test correction stage, you're reinforcing your own knowledge while tutoring your peers.

Initially, students are thinking and scheming; later they are helping themselves by helping their classmates, building up confidence in themselves while mutually sharing areas of expertise with their peers. Thinking, scheming, psyching out others, helping out their peers—these are all products of an active, creative imagination used in the process of learning and assessing progress in a second language.

Here learning and assessment go hand in hand. There is no clear-cut distinction between teaching and testing or between teacher and student since the test-taker also functions as a self-monitor and peer instructor. This kind of learner-centered, cooperative learning/testing activity involves imagination in the true sense of the word because it frees students from the tyranny of being accountable exclusively to the teacher's "hidden agenda" while it empowers them to be guided by their own perceptions of knowledge as well as those of other learners. This technique has elicited the following comments from students: "I liked it because you knew what was coming in the exam." "Things I couldn't understand well, my classmates could help me with." "There is an exchange of knowledge and opinions, and a lot of our doubts are cleared up."

The small-group, task-based activities required them to make up lesson plans, teach their classmates, write up questions and exercises, write up tests, and yes, even take the tests themselves! Two very different groups of students participated: (1) intermediate-level ESL students, and (2) ESL teacher trainees (subsequently identified as "bilinguals") taking more advanced English language classes.

Hidden Agendas

Is it absurd to think that students can teach and test each other as well as themselves? Maybe not. Advocates of student-centered classes say students come to the test with preconceived ideas about what they consider important to study, a mental set that Nunan and Breen (1989) call the students' "hidden agenda." They point out that there is often a discrepancy between what is planned, what is taught, and what is learned. That is, students study what they think is important, which often differs from what the teacher had in mind.

In addition, the second language literature has encouraged teachers to become sensitive to the contributions that learners can make to curriculum design. By making their own input in the class, learners become more involved and become what some have termed "stakeholders" in the educational process. So why not extend this to the test itself? Getting students involved in materials writing, including test writing, helps them to "internalize the material through their own creative involvement" while they assume the role of "collaborator" instead of merely "language receiver" (Clark, 1989:136).

Numerous studies of student-centered approaches to testing have appeared recently in the second language literature. In some experiments, students and teachers cooperatively plan and write formative or summative tests (Smith, 1990; Papadaki, 1991; Murphy, 1991). Another approach, used by Mejia & Ortiz (1993), is to get feedback from students on specific test items after taking a teacher-made test. In the present study, however, student input is present at numerous stages in the teaching and testing sequence. In addition, the strategies are implemented in classes at two different proficiency levels. It is felt that materials writing activities are especially valuable for second language students since in writing their own exercises and tests, students engage in a meaningful problem-solving task which they must carry out by negotiating meaning in the target language. On the other hand, teacher trainees, who are more proficient in English, would also profit from materials writing since it prepares them for similar tasks they will face in the classroom.

Gauging Attitudes

The experiment, which gauged the attitudes of the two groups of students to materials preparation, used a sequence of five steps: Lesson Preparation, Test Preparation, Lesson Presentation, Test Administration, and Peer Tutoring. In the Lesson Preparation stage, students working in groups of three or four are given instructions to prepare a lesson on one part of their textbook unit to present orally to the class. In some cases, depending on the nature of the class, teaching the lesson also means conducting practice or drill on specific skills. In the case of a grammar lesson, for instance, ESL students assuming the role of teacher either use the grammar exercises from the textbook to practice with the class or prepare their own materials. In the classes of teacher trainees, lesson preparation involved directing a discussion on an assigned reading in a journal or one from a unit in their textbook.

Preparation and Administration

In the Lesson Preparation phase, student groups present their lessons to the class. Group members are expected to participate equally in the presentation and are evaluated individually on their oral performance. At the same time, the students listening to the group presentations are encouraged to take notes since they know they will be tested on the material in the near future. After preparing the lesson, students write quiz or test items to assess their classmates' comprehension of the material. During this activity, the teacher initially gives orientation on strategies for writing test items and sets guidelines on types of items to be used. Then, while students are writing their items in their group, the teacher circulates around the classroom giving feedback.

Both student-made and teacher-made test items are incorporated into either short quizzes for checking comprehension of the material or used in unit exams. In general, in any quiz or unit exam, the ratio of teacher-made to student-made items is 50-50. Thus, all students are aware that the test will include both items that they and their classmates have written as well as teacher-made ones.

Peer Tutoring

When the corrected and graded quizzes or tests are returned, the students are given a correction task. They must correct their mistakes or weak areas on the test, and, in some cases, supply a rule explanation or an expansion of an idea. For example, in a grammar item, the student corrects the error and supplies the rule. However, in a discussion or essay item, "corrections" may involve writing a short paragraph to clarify or expand on an idea. These corrections are done with the added incentive that additional points will be added to their test grade. However, before beginning the correction task, students are to seek help or advice from their classmates who prepared these items. Thus, each student is both "test writer" as well as "test taker." As test writer he or she is an "expert" on some portion of the test and is in the position to help or advise classmates in the correction task. As "test taker" the student seeks advice from other "experts".

This activity requires considerable independence of movement, as students move around the classroom seeking and giving advice. Meanwhile, for the ESL group, purposeful negotiation of meaning is taking place in the target language (although students who share a common L1 may use it to explain grammatical rules).[1]

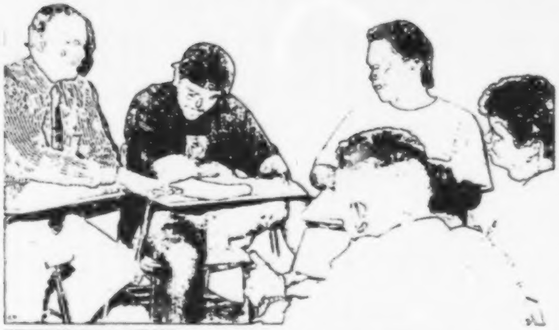
Reactions

These activities, which took place at the University of Puerto Rico, Humacao campus, were repeated throughout the semester in both groups. The ESL group was composed of first year students taking a required course in Basic English. The ESL teacher trainees, mostly proficient English-Spanish bilinguals, were taking courses in language acquisition and English-Spanish contrastive analysis which are offered in a program leading to a B.A. degree in Teaching English as a Second Language. At the end of the semester both groups were asked to fill out an open-ended attitude questionnaire which asked for reactions to the following tasks: working in groups; writing their own materials, including tests; taking combined teacher-made and student-made tests; and correcting their tests by consulting their peers.

Motivation Soars

Although both groups of students were positive toward these learner-centered strategies, the ESL students appeared to be more enthusiastic when asked if they learned more using this approach. The ESL students pointed to the benefits of sharing knowledge with their classmates. One student said, "I learned a lot because in this way we know what our classmates are thinking. It was beneficial since we were able to exchange ideas and having to explain these ideas to others resulted in having clearer and more understandable ideas." While many of the bilinguals felt similarly, many others from this group pointed to the need for more teacher input. One teacher trainee commented, "I learned what the other students taught, but at times it is necessary for the professor to explain more."

Next, when the two groups were asked to express a preference for either small group work or learning through a teacher-directed class, the ESL students were overwhelmingly in favor of group work while the bilinguals appeared divided on this issue. One comment by an ESL student was: "Through the group we get more motivated, we put more effort into our work, and our mind is open because we do the work ourselves." The bilingual students, on the other hand, either preferred a teacher-directed class or alternating between the two approaches. Said one: "I don't believe it is good to completely depend on a mentor. The strategy of working in groups should complement but not substitute the work of the teacher.'"



Dr. Kaufman (left) prepares students to write questions.

Test-Writing Popular among Students

As for writing their own tests, both groups found the experience beneficial. Most teacher trainees remarked that writing test items helped them to comprehend the material better. "It was beneficial," said one bilingual, "because it helped us not just to memorize facts but to really understand the material." This comment was echoed by many ESL students, but, in addition, many of them pointed out the advantage of having a clearer idea of what was expected of them. Said one: "I liked it because you knew more or less what was coming in the exam," adding "many times professors put items in the exam that students don't understand." Another second language student said the use of this strategy showed that the teacher recognized that students can make valuable input to the class. She put it this way, "I thought it was a good idea because the teacher was taking us into account and is recognizing that we can also express our own ideas."

One of the most interesting findings of this study related to the validity of the tests themselves. Some of the questions that were running through this researcher's mind were the following: How valid are test items which the students write and then give to their classmates or take themselves? Would the students merely give away the answers to items they were writing to their classmates in the other groups? However, in the final analysis, this didn't seem to be a serious problem with either class. In fact, when asked if the test-writing activity was beneficial, the only negative reaction came from a student who in complete honesty replied, "Not as effective as it could have been because the groups did not share their items with other groups because of lack of time." Another student's comment reinforced my feeling that perhaps the strategy of knowing only some of the items in the test had a kind of "tease effect"; that is, it was an incentive to study for the items you didn't know. When asked if she liked test-writing, this student responded: "I loved it! When I prepared my exams I always made very difficult items. But my group mates wanted to make them easier. I didn't want them easy because we never knew how difficult the teacher's exam was going to be. I felt it was better to prepare yourself to the maximum so that you won't regret it later on."

Students Positive to Peer Correction

The last question referred to the "peer correction" stage where students were asked to correct their exams after consulting classmates who wrote the items. The question was: "When you corrected your exams, did your classmates help you to understand your errors?" Here again both groups were positive to this approach with the only dissension coming from a few bilingual students with mixed feelings about the procedure. An ESL student wrote: "Now that we see that we can learn by asking our friends, we don't have to depend so much on the professor." A bilingual student, however, felt that giving and seeking advice at the same time was too demanding: "My classmates helped me. But I didn't want to bother them too much because they also had difficulties and had to ask for help from other groups."

The commentaries from the two groups—bilingual and second language learners—would seem to indicate that the appropriateness of these activities depends on the task at hand and the proficiency level of the student. The bilingual students seemed to favor more teacher input, especially at the lesson preparation stage, while the second language students liked group work because it gave them the opportunity to participate more in the class in a non-threatening way and helped to vary the class routine. Both groups, however, were positive to the idea of test writing, but for different reasons. The bilinguals thought it helped them to understand the material more thoroughly, while the second language students liked it because it gave them the opportunity to know in advance what was coming on the test.

Student-centered learning is not for everyone. As this study demonstrates, the success of this approach depends on the nature of the class, the proficiency level of the student, and the specific task the student is undertaking. But there may be other variables as well—for example, the student's individual learning style or the teacher's own teaching style. Finally, the cultural background of students may be important to the extent that it influences how the students view their own roles in relation to the teacher (Kaufman, 1993; McCargar, 1993). However, for these students in Puerto Rico having them teach and test themselves is one way of narrowing the gap between two "hidden" agendas—those of the teacher and the student.

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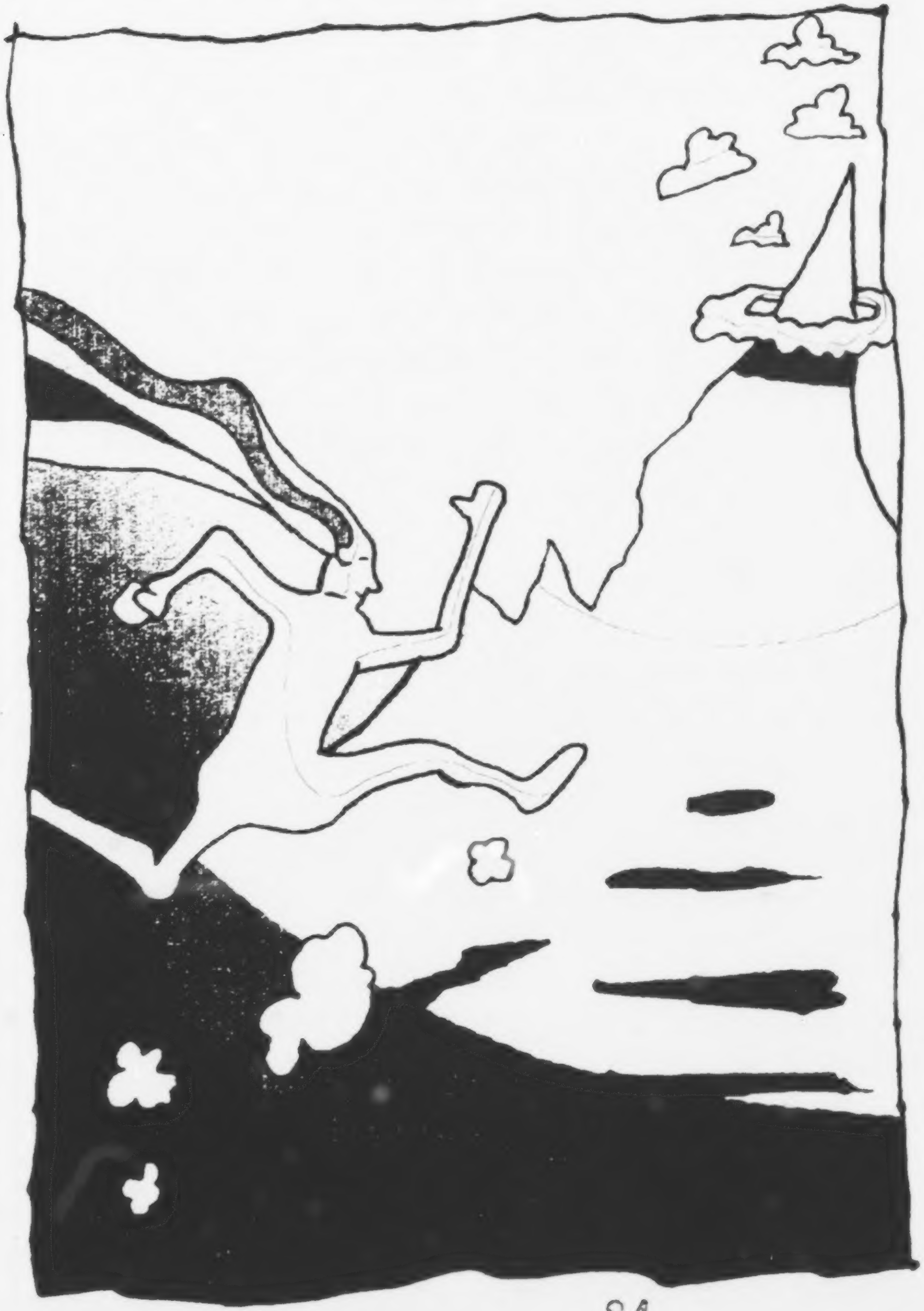

Jargon Cells: Integrating Grammar and Lexis through Topical Focus

Judy Hartt

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Recent research indicates that certain grammar structures appear in clusters within particular modes of discourse (Byrd and Reid, 1998). For example, a narrative essay requires a working knowledge of transitional words that convey a logical progression to the culmination of the story. Such transitional words constitute a cluster. Another example is the cluster of verb tenses that are essential to this progression. These studies also indicate that students can apply the contents of a specific grammar cluster to a wide range of narrative topics. Inverting this process—that is, strategically choosing a single topic--offers the opportunity of putting into place an even more systematic and effective teaching device. By focusing on a single topic that naturally incorporates a cluster, we can teach (1) the components of that cluster in speech as well as writing, and (2) the cultural context of the topic. I call such a collection of related linguistic elements a "jargon cell." Some of the jargon cells that I have developed are based on traditional American heritage themes that broaden not only students' English vocabulary, but also their knowledge of diverse American cultures (Figure 1). In this paper, I exemplify the technique by discussing in detail the construction of a jargon cell that deals with travel and related prepositions, phrases, adjectives, and idioms.

Figure 1. Discourse Modes and Jargon Cell Topics

Discourse Mode	*Topic*	*Grammar Focus*
Narration	Native American Nations	Count + Non-count Nouns + Articles
Cause and Effect	Notorious American Gangsters	Modal Auxiliaries
Description	Vintage American Comedy	Teams Question Words
Process	A Vicarious Road Trip	Prepositional Configurations
Classification	Vintage Cartoon Characters	Pronoun and Antecedent Agreement

Choosing a Topic

Once the jargon cell is constructed, it constitutes the heart of a clearly defined system of instruction. Initially at least, it is the teacher who is responsible for constructing the cell. The process begins with the selection of a topic that should be cross-cultural: students should already have a good understanding of the concept in their own cultures or through recent experience in the USA. The topic should also have sufficient depth to support the incorporation of as many speaking and writing tools as possible; that is, it should lend itself to the study of manuscript style, reading, composition and articulation (Scarcella and Oxford, 1998). In developing a jargon cell based on prepositions and travel, the second step is listing as many prepositional configurations as possible (See Figure 3). Current computer software that includes a dictionary and thesaurus is helpful, as are ESL web sites on the internet (see Appendix).

Objective: Flow of Information

The main objective of this jargon cell assignment is the generation by students of a logical flow of written and spoken information. For example, with our topic of "Travel," students must be able to read a road map, measure distance, interpret a legend, and explain information in complete, effective sentences. This topic conforms easily to the requirements of authentic purpose, targeted audience, and substantial process that are emphasized in the ESL literature on rhetoric and composition (Reid, 1988). A rich selection of reference sources involving road travel in the USA permits modification of the assignment to satisfy particular circumstances, such as class size, cultural makeup and the availability of technological services. Because travel is a universal concept, explanation of the topic requires a minimal amount of time.

Figure 2. Stages in Development of a Jargon Cell

Step 1. Choosing a Topic
Step 2. Constructing the Grammar Components
Step 3. Research: Information gathering by students
Step 4. Composition
Step 5. Articulation: Oral presentation by students
Step 6. Evaluation

Responsibilities of Teacher

Developing and conducting a jargon cell activity falls into six distinct steps (See Figure 2): choosing a topic, constructing the grammar components, research, composition, articulation and evaluation. Like the choice of a topic, the assembling of elements of grammar is the responsibility of the teacher. He or she sifts through lists of simple and multiple-word prepositions that are clearly identified with road travel (e.g., direction, time and location) and that can be classified as members of a common jargon cell. To add depth to the unit, phrasal verbs, adjectives and prepositions, and pertinent idioms that contain prepositions should be included. Isolating topic-related terminology into a compact jargon cell allows students the opportunity to concentrate their efforts on one collection of terms and phrases at a time.

Different ligestyles and fashions are encountered in Hartt's venture into 'depth of expression.'

Figure 3: Grammar Elements in "Travel" Jargon Cell

One-Word Prepositions

above
about
across
after
along
alongside
around
at
below
beneath
beside
between
beyond
down
for
from
in
into
near
on
onto
opposite
over
past
through
toward
under
until
within

Two-Word Prepositions

ahead of
away from
bound for
close to
down from
down to
east (west, north, south) of
far from
on to
up to
way down
way over
way up

Three and Four-Word Prepositions

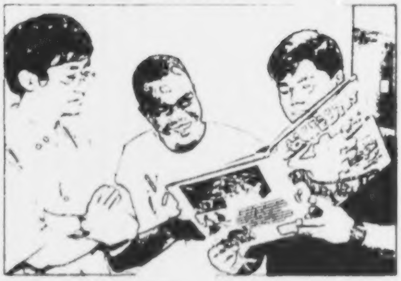
as far as
at the intersection of
at the point of
by way of
for the purpose of
in the middle of
to the north (south, each, west) of

Phrasal Verbs *(Useful for directional information)*

arrive in, at
burn up (the road)
catch sight of
come across
come through
converge with
gas up
go straight
head out
intersect with
set back
set out

cut across
cut through
double back
drive through, toward, up, down, around
wind up
depend on
end up

-ed Adjectives with Prepositions *(Useful for details about city and state)*



Humor and vicarious adventure result from Hartt's approach.

accustomed to
alarmed at, by
amazed at, by
annoyed at, by
astonished at, by
bored with, by
clothed in
composed of
confined to
confused at, by
covered with
delighted at, by
disappointed in, with
employed at (place) by (company
entertained by
impressed by
occupied with
perplexed about, at, by
pleased with
puzzled at, by
relieved to
shocked at, by
suited to (person) for (occasion)
surprised by, at

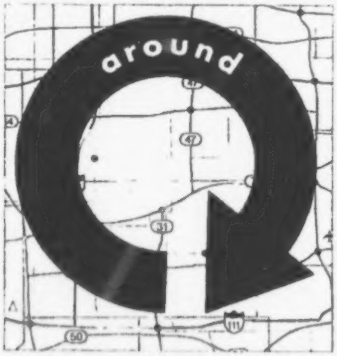
Idioms *(Useful for adding creative flair)*

along for the ride
as the crow flies
a stone's throw away
change of pace
don't let the grass grow under your feet
end of the road
end of the world
fork in the road
hang around
have a go at it
hole in the wall
in the middle of nowhere
in two shakes of a lamb's tail
jumping off place
like a bat out of hell
load up the car
make a beeline for
make a day of it
off the beaten track (path)
put the pedal to the metal

Pinpointing Locations

The best way to acquaint students with the abstract quality of the listed prepositions is to secure a large road map of the state where the class is presently located. With the map displayed, pinpoint your location. From that mark, point out county lines, state lines, map legend, city and town index, and so on. Return to the pinpointed city and begin explaining the relationship of each preposition in the jargon cell. Make an arrow from self-adhesive colored paper for each preposition of direction and location, and write the terms on appropriate arrows (see Figure 4). Work through each term illustrating how that particular preposition relates to the location of the city. To reinforce the concept, practice that procedure with other locations on the map. Marcella Frank's *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide* includes helpful illustrations that explain "direction of movement in regard to a point" (p. 165, 1993). Following this grammar drill, a detailed explanation of what is expected from each student throughout the process of completing the assignment should be given. A suggested outline of the explanation follows:

Figure 4. Prepositions of Direction and Location
The Assignment



A ROAD TRIP WE WILL TAKE

I. Each student is assigned a city that can be traveled to by car within the continental United States. (Choose historic sites, natural wonders, remote towns where famous people lived, etc.) Give the following instructions to students:

- Obtain a map of the continental U. S.
- Highlight boundary lines of the state where the assigned city is located. Pinpoint the city.
- Use the map's legend to assist in locating the capital city of the state and pinpoint that city.
- Highlight boundary lines of state where you are presently located.
- Pinpoint city of your present location.
- Using the legend, signify Interstate (Federal), Highway (State) and Road (County) systems.
- Trace the best possible route based on self-directed research from your present location (city) to your assigned location (city). As you plan the route, carefully correlate prepositional terminology to explain changes in direction, roads, states, regions.
- Collect the following facts about your road trip:
    1. Comparison of time zones between your present location and your assigned location
    2. Total mileage
    3. Population of assigned city
    4. Name of county where city is located
    5. Type of terrain surrounding city
    6. Local attractions (natural, historical, etc.)
    7. Average climate conditions (the best time to visit the area)
    8. Basic economic structure
    9. Recreation
    10. Telephone area code
    11. Postal zip code
    12. Local universities

II. Each student will prepare a visual display that illustrates the following state symbols: State seal, State flag, State bird, State flower, and State motto.

III. Each student must write an essay that will be the basis of an orchestrated oral presentation before the class. The oral presentation will include a prepared map, a visual display of symbols, and the written essay. Details about the assigned city and state must emphasize usage of prepositions denoting direction, location, and time.

In order to facilitate explanation of the assignment, have at hand a state road map for each assigned city and state, and distribute them accordingly. Try to choose cities located in as many different areas of the United States as possible. This leads to a better understanding of many colloquial idiomatic usages of prepositions. When students have located their assigned cities, direct their attention to the maps' legends. The students should note the wealth of colorful, general information about the state.

Research: Information Gathering by Students

The key to success in this phase of the project is to utilize as many tangible learning tools as possible. Real road maps, real atlases and real computer software place a stamp of validity on the lengthy assignment. The research techniques students use to assemble their reports are valuable to any field of study, in any language. To generate the most effective learning experience, list as required reference sources the following: an authentic road map, an atlas, computer software (for example, Trip Maker by Rand McNally & Co., 1994), an encyclopedia, a telephone book, a zip code directory, the internet (for example, e-mail is excellent for finding information about attractions that are near the assigned city but are off the beaten track), travel book, and an American idiom directory.

Prof. Hartt (left) uses maps to explain the use of prepositions.

Composition

As reported by Reid, Scarcella, and Oxford, the processes of writing compositions according to the basic modes of discourse are as essential in ESL classes as they are in regular English classes. One of the most easily taught modes is that of explaining how to do something, or how to get from here to there. The chronological and spatial aspects embedded in the concept of road travel easily support the sequenced explanation assigned to the process mode. The three basic sections of a process composition—introduction, body and conclusion—assist the students in determining how to organize/arrange their collected information.

The introduction names the process of travel and indicates why and under what circumstances it is performed. The body normally treats one major stage of the procedure. This stage is divided into several steps presented in chronological and/or spatial order, interrupted only for essential explanations or cautions. (Such an interruption is italicized in the following example: "Travel west on I-20 to Dallas, Texas, where I-20 intersects with I-45 South. *Be careful at this interchange because there is major road construction in this area.*") The conclusion summarizes the results of the process and can explain the significance of these results.

Personal Creativity and Idioms

Formal writing associated with rhetoric often intimidates less advanced students. To avoid this, the teacher might encourage a reliance on personal creativity. That teacher might also consider expanding the jargon cell to include phrasal verbs, *-ed* participial adjectives and prepositions, and idioms containing prepositions. These interesting idiomatic phrases can play a key role in allowing students the opportunity to showcase their own voice and mood. One of my students, a Yugoslavian world-class swimmer, directed his classmates *to head for the mountains, grab a Coors Light, and go for the gusto.* In his next sentence he also warned us *to watch the spit* [sic] *limit.* Idioms are challenging, and gaining fluency in the use of them takes a great deal of effort and dedication.

It could prove useful to the students to know that many idioms can be correlated to familiar parts of speech. Some idioms are verbal: "You *will catch sight of* the city as you come down the mountain highway" and "If you *burn up the road*, you can drive the distance in ten hours." Some idioms are adjectival: "We are hoping to find an isolated place *off the beaten track* to go on our vacation." Some are adverbial: "You have to *drive like crazy* to reach the city before dark." Others are nominal: "When you have reached this destination, it's as if you have reached *the end of the world.*" Students can be required to use at least one dictionary of American idioms and to consult internet sites specifically geared toward idiomatic structure. An example is:

ESL Emporium at http://nbm.company.com/emporium.html. Students can include any related idiomatic expression, even if it does not contain a preposition. Some interesting additions have *been wanderlust, bottleneck, all systems go, come in handy, get your rear in gear*, and *boogie on down the road*. The focus of the assignment is not only on planning a road trip, but also on giving students a chance to explain the process with newly acquired English language skills. The jargon cell approach provides this opportunity.

Articulation: Oral Presentation

Each student acquires knowledge about a particular area of the USA. Mainly out of curiosity, the other students want to know about that area and are therefore willing to listen with attention. In this way, there forms a natural theater situation that the teacher can take advantage of. In fact, the oral presentation should be conceived as a well-orchestrated performance that involves correct pronunciation of cities and states, correct identification of the USA roadway system, and correct preparation of visual aides. Students are responsible for their own visual aides, which have varied from colorful posters with hand drawings, to travel brochures, to computer–projector slides. Interest and excitement builds as students compete to see who can make the most spectacular presentations. One interesting aspect is that each student develops a loyalty to his or her assigned location and takes personal pride in displaying the selling points of the location.

Evaluation

An unscientific but often effective way to determine results is by listening to what the students have to say. Some commented that they had never used a U.S. map to any significant extent before and had not realized that so much information is packed so efficiently in symbols and lines. Many said that manipulating the software program *Trip Maker* was excellent practice on the computer in general. Others enjoyed e-mailing the respective Chambers of Commerce for travel and tourist information. However, virtually all reported having enjoyed least the writing of a structured essay that had to be submitted for a grade.

Three of my Chinese students actually traveled to one of their assigned cities. They drove to San Antonio, Texas, to see the beautiful Christmas lighting festivities and the flotilla on the San Antonio River that flows through downtown San Antonio. The students were amazed because they heard very little English from the average American citizen while there. They heard a third language–Spanish! The students were very pleased that they knew so much about the city before they actually visited it. They found themselves explaining a few points of interest to other tourists–the actual duration of the battle of the Alamo, the historical development of the Mexican Market Place, the significance of the Hemisphere. Two of my Japanese students took a side trip to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on their way to Washington, D.C. Listening to their excitement as they described being [illegible] the exact spot where the Wright brothers flew the first airplane convinced me that the assignment, even the written portion, had been a worthwhile project.

Conclusion

Not much has been written about going deeply into one narrow area of usage with an intermediate class of language learners. In a sense, then, we have broken a little ground by at least attempting to do that. Some of the skills gained through constructing jargon cells remain out of balance until they are integrated with other parts of the language system. We will await the opinion of researchers as to whether or not that is a good idea. While this approach does call for some memorization, doors to far more dynamic activities were pushed open by my students, often before I saw what was happening. As a result, I am convinced that a well-planned jargon cell can be quite useful in teaching students who want to "boogie on down the road" toward a better understanding of the American version of English.

Appendix:

The following study-help sites are available on the internet:

A Collection of Unique Expressions, Sayings, and Quotes.
http://www.baylor.edu/~Larry_Frazier/lang.htm

Cobuild Idiom of the Day.
http://titania.cobuild.collins.co.uk/Idiom.html

Internet TESL Journal. "Idioms."

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Frank, Marcella. 1993. *Modern English: A Practical Reference Guide*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Reid, Joy. 1988. *The Process of Composition*, 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.

Scarcella, Robin and Rebecca Oxford. 1998. *The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.'

Trip Maker *(computer software for Windows 95). 1994. Rand McNally and Co.*

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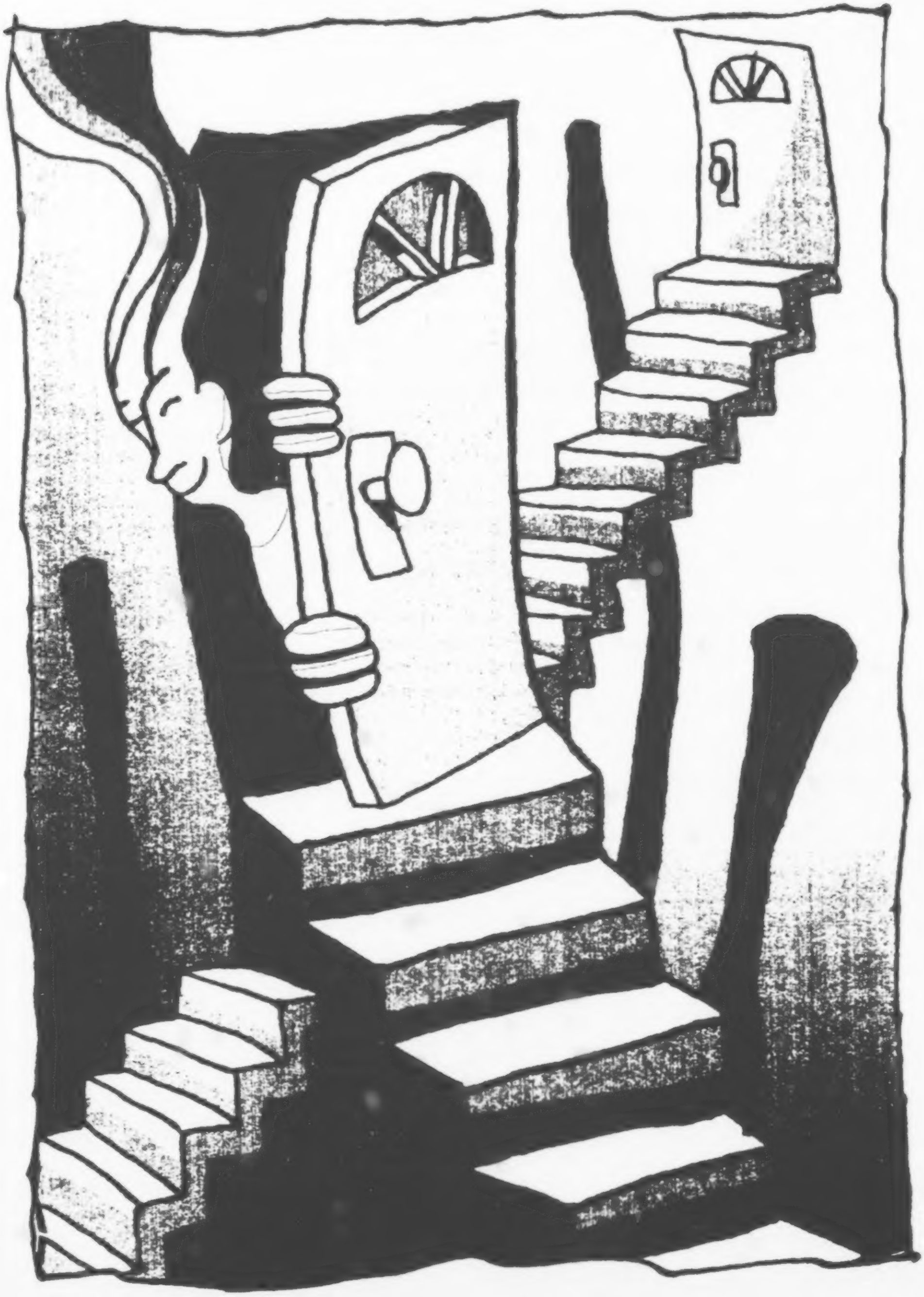

An ESL-TESL Drop-in-Center that Works

Connie Mitchell and Christine Mueller

Connie Mitchell, who holds a B.A. in English and Linguistics and an M.Ed. in Teaching English as a Second Language, is currently a teaching assistant enrolled in a doctoral program at the University of Cincinnati. She is also an adjunct instructor at Cincinnati State Community College.

Christine Mueller is working for a M.Ed. in Literacy with a specialization in Teaching English as a Second Language at the University of Cincinnati. She has taught ESL courses in the University's ESL program.

The Drop-In-Center (DIC) at the University of Cincinnati is a cross between a lab and a lounge, jointly run by programs that usually remain at a curious distance from one another. One of the programs is concerned with the teaching of English as a Second Language (ESL), and the other with the preparation of teachers of ESL (TESL). This article describes that Center and mentions the ways in which it benefits both groups. Although there is no attempt to discuss the broader, more philosophical issues involved in a close relationship between the two programs, the success of the Center tends to offer positive evidence. It is significant that, at our University, both ESL and TESL are headed by the same person, Dr. Susan Jenkins. Inquiries should be addressed to the authors or Dr. Jenkins at The Drop-in-Center; Program in ESL; University of Cincinnati; Cincinnati, Ohio, 45221; USA. E-mail: Susan.Jenkins@email.uc.edu

The Need for "Authentic" English

The DIC was formed as an extension of the ESL Program in 1995 in response to the clear observation by students and faculty that more opportunities were needed for informal communication in "authentic" English outside the classroom. The organization of the facility was the responsibility of the two authors, then graduate teaching assistants (TAs) in the TESL Program, which itself had been established in 1993. Now, only one TA is assigned to the DIC–all of the other ten tutors are either volunteers or graduate students fulfilling practicum credit hours.

Initially, we concentrated on ESL students and did not think that TESL students would consider the DIC of much importance one way or the other. They would do it to fulfill a requirement–little else. We were badly mistaken. Both parties came together very well. Almost instantly, the DIC blossomed and has been healthy and vigorous ever since. In particular, TESL students have welcomed the opportunities to build administrative, teaching and collaborative skills and to conduct formal research. ESL students have a similar enthusiasm:

> *I can ask about some unclear things in American life and get some advice if I need it.*
>
> *Nobody is forced to participate, but usually everyone has something to say. I enjoy these interactions.*
>
> *We can really learn things from the DIC. It's a good chance to practice our English, and we can make friends and actually know something about what is happening in our lives.*
>
> *In the DIC, you have to get the feel, get into the mood of speaking and interacting, and then try to understand and make use of your own vocabulary even if it's not large. You have to practice your way of speech in order to make people understand what you want to say.*

As this evidence indicates, we have tried to make the DIC a learner-centered environment where importance is placed on helping students to feel at ease, enabling them to become comfortable in their target language (Brown 1987, p. 138). The DIC offers an excellent opportunity for ESL students to learn about the culture of the USA. It also provides an authentic environment for them to increase their communicative competence.

Many of the students have expressed their feelings of discomfort in speaking. One in particular related a story about working in a restaurant as a waitress. She spoke to a customer, and he did not understand her. She panicked and began to apologize profusely, to which the customer said, "You'll have to speak up: I'm hard of hearing." The difficulty in communication was not at all due to a deficiency in her speech, but to his hearing problem. This story illustrates the amount of anxiety that non-native speakers of any language experience. They tend to blame themselves for every breakdown in communication. Thus, there is a need to incorporate more authentic experiences into the ESL curriculum. We believe that the Drop-in-Center is one way to do this.

Organization of Center

There is no grade for DIC activities, but attendance is required of all ESL students. Participants are asked to maintain a folder that the tutors sign at the end of each session. The tutors place emphasis on establishing rapport through small talk, learning each other's names, teaching how to include newcomers in conversations, and validating everyone's comments. Specific activities include informal discussions about cultural topics or controversial issues (e.g., travel, health insurance, politics and religion), help with homework assignments, games such as *Scrabble* and Boggle, story-telling such as picture descriptions or personal narratives, presentation practice, pronunciation practice, coaching on specific problems with landlords or the boss, or anything else the students want help with.

The arrangement of the physical DIC is more informal than a structured classroom. The room is not too big, which has proven to be better in that it allows students to feel closer to one another. The students sit at tables *with* the tutors: it is not a teacher-fronted tutorial environment. There are several bookshelves with magazines, a collection of ESL books, and assorted teaching materials for the tutors and student to use. Recently a coffee and tea machine was added to create a more relaxed, "chit-chat" atmosphere. In short, the DIC looks and feels "lived in." One or two tutors serve from one to ten students during each of the 10-16 opening hours per week. Different tutors often engage in conversations with students in different parts of the room. Students are free to break off into their own subgroups and carry on conversations among themselves. Every so often, all groups come together and are addressed by one of the tutors.

Tutors (second right) often initiate a topic and then let students develop it.

Responsibility and Research

This general arrangement has at least two distinct advantages. First, it provides an opportunity for ESL students to take charge of their own learning by discussing issues that are of concern to them. Second, it presents TESL students many opportunities for research. No fewer than seven different projects have been made involving the DIC. Among these are two studies by Ms. Mitchell: *Negotiating Meaning: Tutor/Student Relationships* which will be published as a monograph, and *Communication Styles of Chinese ESL Speakers*, her dissertation. Other ongoing research projects include *Participation Structures and Conflict in an ESL Drop-in-Center* by Kate Reynolds and *Reflecting the World of Teaching in an ESL Drop-in-Center* by Susan Jenkins and Holli Schauber, which looks at the education of teachers.

Conclusion

The DIC is constantly evolving and changing because the tutors and students are evolving and changing. We began using primarily TAs, and now we have practicum TESL students, volunteers, and instructors who hold their office hours there. Originally, all of our tutors were native speakers of English, and now some of them are non-native. The authors were given the opportunity to train practicum students and to help them to learn to operate in as well as to administer the Center. The ESL students are able to look beyond the one-on-one instruction of traditional tutoring and to appreciate the benefits of group interaction in language learning. In short, it is a win-win situation, and we are glad to be a part of it.

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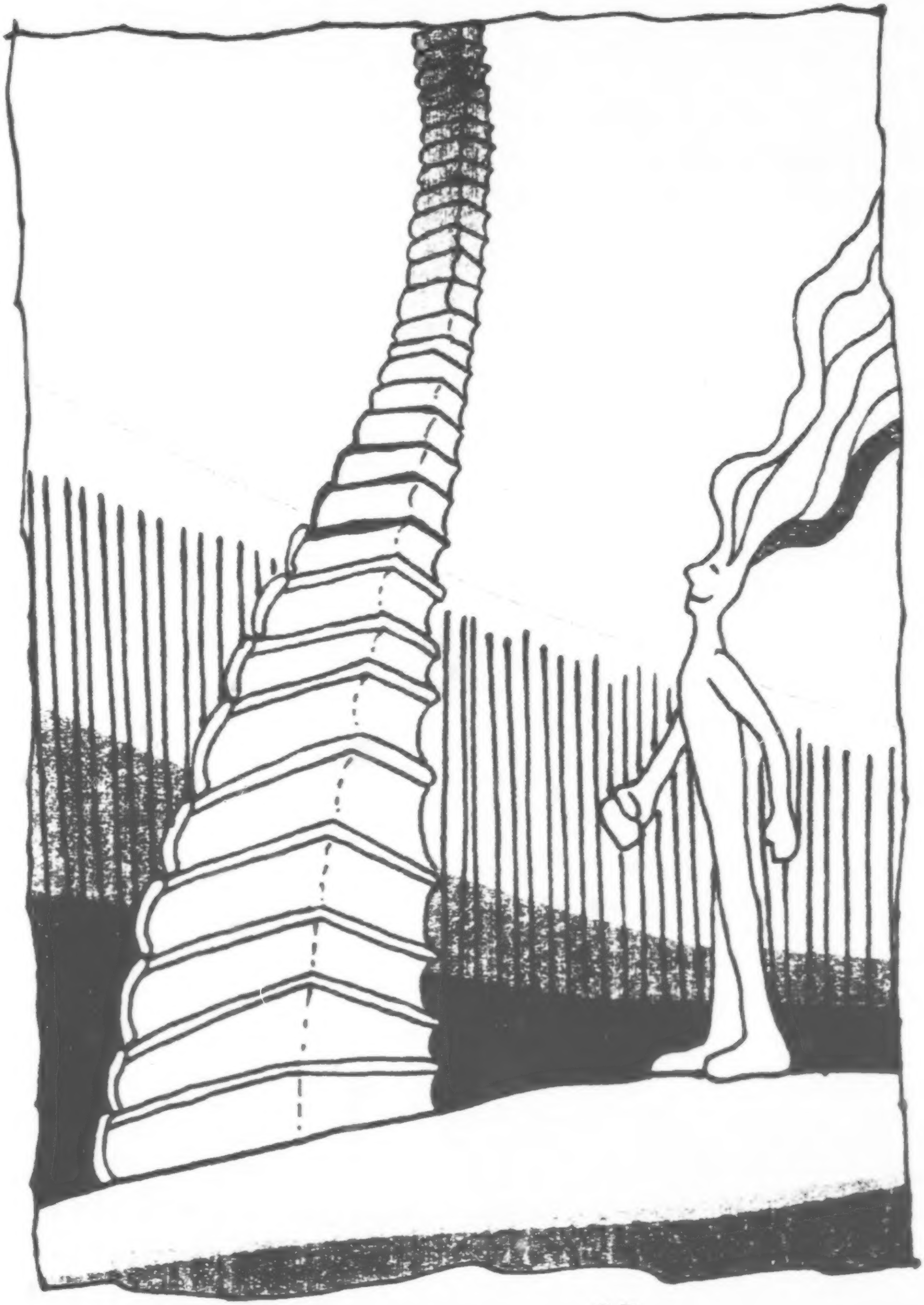

Junk Mail Catalogs: A Treasure-Trove for Language Teachers

Susan L. Schwartz

Susan L. Schwartz holds master's degrees in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages and in International Administration from the School for International Training in Brattleboro, Vermont. In the USA, she has taught ESL in a variety of contexts. She has also worked in English as a Foreign Language in China and Indonesia. Her current interests are in materials development, teacher training, and program administration. Recently, she taught lecturers of College English at Nanjing University in Jiangsu, the People's Republic of China.

Introduction

Most people probably would not think of a junk mail catalog as a source of treasure. For many of us, unsolicited mail order catalogs are a bane of daily life. However, these publications contain a huge variety of pictures and a wealth of cultural information. Teachers can easily use junk mail catalogs to create a picture file and then design lessons based on the pictures. This article briefly explains the benefits of using pictures, offers some suggestions for using pictures from junk mail catalogs, and describes three lesson plans. At the end of the article, information on how to contact several catalog companies is provided: those with fax numbers and addresses will mail their catalogs overseas.

Why Use Pictures?

Pictures are a great incentive for language production and can be used in many ways in the classroom. "Specifically, pictures contribute to: interest and motivation; a sense of the context of the language; a specific reference point or stimulus" (Wright 19). Many pictures in junk mail catalogs are especially suitable for small group activities. Speaking, writing, vocabulary, grammar and cross-cultural lessons at all levels can be designed around the use of pictures.

One of the main advantage is that teachers do not have to spend any money to get them. They can call a toll-free number, from the US and Canada, and request that a catalog be mailed to them. Companies are glad to send their free literature to potential customers. Catalogs are aimed at a wide variety of audiences, and the pictures in them are likewise very diverse. Consequently, teachers can easily create an extensive picture file which contains all kinds of subject matter. I have received catalogs for food, gardening, sports, leisure, furniture, fashion, jewelry, New Age products, and for items related to education, religion, the environment, computers, travel, and medicine. Once your name is on a list for one catalog, you will inevitably find yourself receiving junk mail catalogs from companies you never even knew existed!

Valuable Aid in Teaching about the USA

Pictures in American catalogs show people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, as well as people of different ages. For students learning English, such models can provide a representative sample of "typical" Americans. These pictures can also be used to discuss stereotypes that some students may have. In addition, many catalogs depict people participating in all kinds of recreational and leisure activities, both indoors and outdoors. Some catalogs are published several times a year, and their pictures show seasonal influences. When teachers have a large collection of such pictures, their students are better able to understand the society of the USA and the diversity of the population.

Since the purpose of a junk mail catalog is to entice the reader to buy the products in it, the quality of the pictures is very high. Usually, there is only a little text covering part of the photograph because the companies want to show off their products. In most cases, each picture highlights one item and that makes it easy for students to identify the subject matter. Teachers should consider saving pictures of all sizes because they will be able to use them in different kinds of activities. Photos are often rather small, the size of a postage stamp or even smaller. Although teachers could not use such pictures for a whole-class activity, they are ideal for small-groups, pairs, or students working individually. Actually, when students are sitting at their desks and doing a writing task, using smaller pictures may be easier since they do not take up so much space. One other benefit of using pictures from junk mail catalogs is environmental. Most people routinely throw away or recycle their junk mail. But if teachers cut out the pictures and use them in their classrooms, they have at least found some useful purpose for all that paper.

Selecting and Using Pictures

The pictures in the catalogs are usually identified by a letter or number, with a written description of the item on the same page. Some teachers may feel it is distracting for students to see those letters or numbers. If desired, they could cut them out. Alternatively, they could leave the item number or letter on the picture and then use that for easy identification. For example, a teacher could divide the class into Group A and Group B and distribute pictures which show the letters "A" or "B" on them to the respective groups. The pictures do not have to be uniformly shaped; the placement of text often prevents that. Instead of discarding a picture just because a little text covers part of it, a teacher might consider cutting around the text: as long as most of the image remains and the meaning is clearly discernible, the picture can be used. In my opinion, photos with irregular shapes have just as much value as square-shaped pictures. None of my students have ever commented on the shape of a picture. However, sometimes it is useful to retain the text. If the picture shows a scene from nature or a foreign country, students may want to know where the picture is from. Or the picture may show an object whose cost the students may ask about. In such cases as these, it is helpful to attach the written description to the back of the picture so that the teacher and/or students can refer to it when necessary.

Since the paper used in junk mail catalogs is not very thick, teachers would be well-advised to back them on stiff paper or to laminate them. If teachers have access to a laminating machine, here are two ideas: (A) laminate same-sized pictures back-to-back to conserve the amount of laminating plastic required, and (B) laminate several small pictures on one sheet and use them for comparisons: the pictures could be of similar or dissimilar subjects.

Lesson Plans

The lesson plans discussed below are for speaking, grammar, and writing activities. The length of time required to implement each activity is not given because each class is different and teachers will be able to judge for themselves how much time their students will need to complete the tasks. The lessons are described in general terms and teachers should feel free to modify them as they see fit. They can be used in both ESL and EFL contexts.

Focus on Speaking: This is for students at beginning and intermediate levels. The objective is to practice asking and answering questions. Each student needs one picture. (Pictures of people from various ethnic, economic, age, and gender groups are particularly useful. Fashion catalogs are good sources of such pictures.) The procedure is as follows: First, as a class, have the students generate a list of interview questions. Write them on the board. Then distribute the pictures to the students. Tell them they will become the person in their picture. The students must create a biography for that person. Give the students time to think. Next, divide the students into pairs. Tell them to take turns interviewing each other, using the questions generated earlier. Students should give answers based on the identities they created for the person in their picture. As a follow-up, students can write a one-paragraph biography of their person.

Focus on Grammar: This works well with intermediate-level students. The objective is to practice using comparatives and superlatives. The materials needed are sets of pictures—one set per student—which show similar objects; e.g., a set that shows different kinds of shoes, a set that shows different kinds of hats, or watches, or cars, etc. The directions for the activity are: Give one set of pictures to each student. Tell students they should use comparatives and superlatives (which have been taught prior to doing this activity) to describe the objects in their pictures. They should write as many sentences as possible. For instance, they can write "'The black shoe is prettier than the brown shoe," "The red shoe is smaller than the blue shoe," " I like the green shoe because it is the most beautiful." When students have finished writing, they should form small groups and read their sentences to each other. They should check for errors, both spoken and written, and discuss whether they agree or disagree with the statements made about the objects in the pictures. This activity also lends itself to a discussion of American culture—for example, if the pictures present items of clothing, teachers can provide information about when and where particular items are worn. Department store catalogs are a good source of these types of pictures.

Focus on Writing: Teachers can do this activity with students who are at intermediate and advanced levels. The objectives are to practice using transitions and to activate students' creativity. Sets of five to seven pictures whose subjects are unrelated are needed for this activity. The procedure is as follows: Divide students into small groups of three or four. Give one set of pictures to each group. Tell the students to write a paragraph about their sets of pictures; each student should individually write his/her own paragraph. Each picture must be incorporated into the paragraph, so there should be at least as many sentences as there are pictures. A topic sentence and a concluding sentence should also be included.

The pictures can be used in any order. Teachers should tell the students to use transitions (which should be taught before doing this activity) in their paragraphs. Depending on the number of pictures, two or three transitions should suffice. When the students have finished writing, they should exchange papers and do peer correction. Then they can write a second draft and read the rewritten paragraphs out loud to the other group members. Even if the pictures are unrelated in content, it is helpful if the students can easily find a way to connect them. Therefore, I like to form sets of pictures which include a person, a nature scene, and some kind of food with a picture of clothing or accessories, a picture of a sporting or recreational activity, and pictures of various objects.

A photo clipped from a junk mail catalog stimulates conversation between Ms. Schwartz's students.

Conclusion

Although it takes time to look through and cut photographs out of junk mail catalogs, the end result of a comprehensive picture file is well worth the effort. For the students, using these pictures may stimulate and increase their language learning. For teachers, junk mail catalogs are a treasure-trove of pictures whose use is constrained only by the limits of their creativity.

Appendix:

Sources of Junk Mail Catalogs

Name of Catalog	Description	Contact Information
American Express Collections	Sports equipment, jewelry, electronics, home furnishings	Tel. 800-528-8000
Charles Keith, Ltd.	Women's fashions, jewelry, accessories, home furnishings	Tel. 800-388-6565
Hammacher Schlemmer	Products for home and recreation	Tel.800-283-9400; Fax 513-860-3396; Address: Operations Center, 9180 LeSaint Dr., Fairfield, OH 45014 USA
Harry and David	Food baskets	Tel. 800-345-5655
L.L. Bean	Casual clothes, footwear	Tel.800-341-4341; Fax 207-552-4080; Address: L.L. Bean, inc., Freeport, Maine 04033 USA
Land's End	Casual clothing, accessories	Tel. 800-356-4444; Fax 608-935-400; Address: 1 Land's End Lane, Dodgeville, WI 53595 USA

The Music Stand	Products from the field of performing arts	Tel.800-717-7010; Fax 603-298-5553; Address: 1 Music Stand Plaza, 66 Bennning St., West Lebanon, NH 03784 USA
The Sharper Image	Gadgets, small appliances	Tel.800-344-4444; Fax 415-445-1508; Address: 650 Davis St., San Francisco, CA 94110 USA
The Source for Everything Jewish	Products with a Jewish theme	Tel. 800-426-2527
Stern's	Products from the department store	Tel. 800-845-4700
Talbot's	Women's fashions, accessories	Tel. 800-992-9010
Vantage Travel Service	Vacation tours around the world	Tel. 800-322-6677

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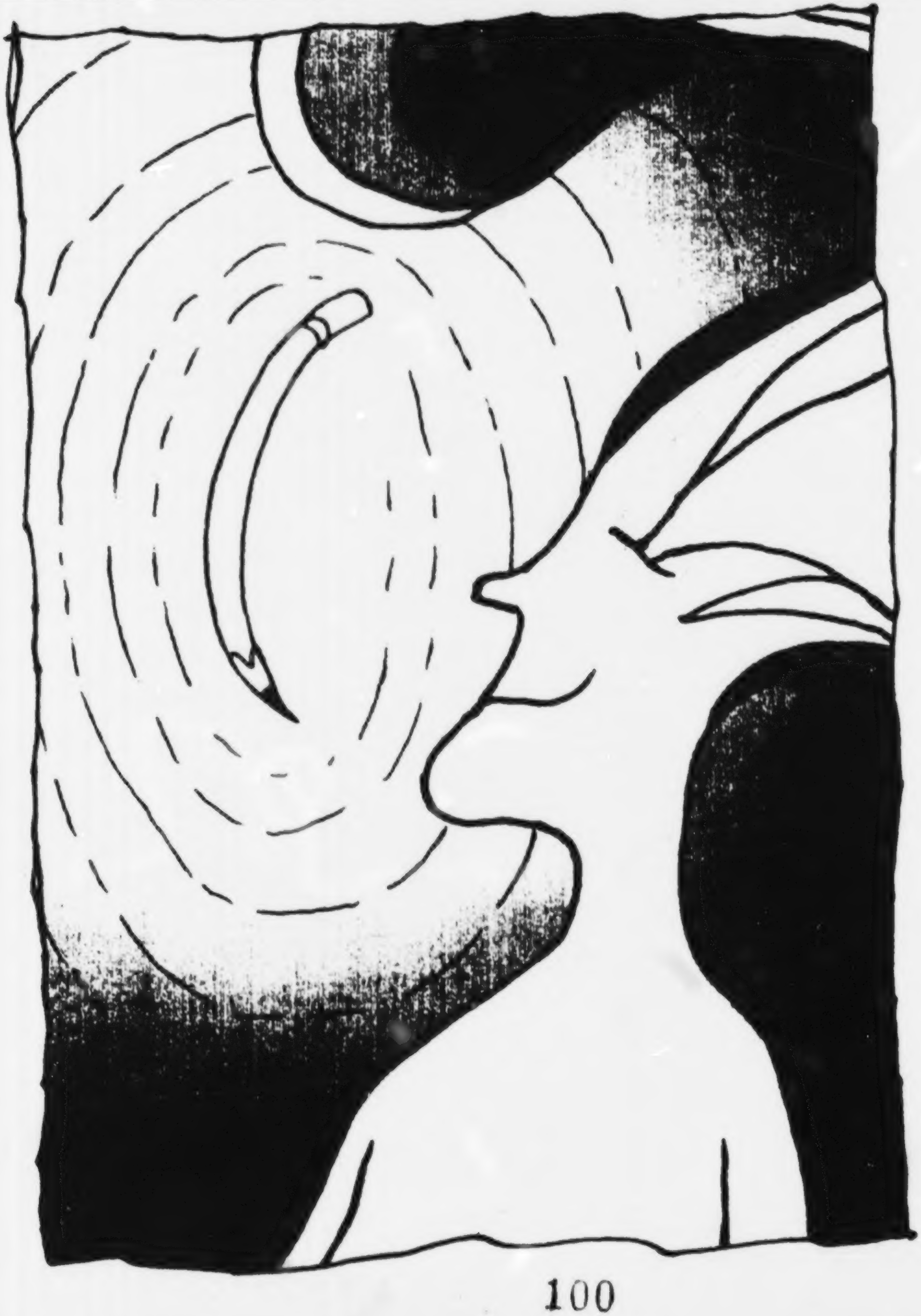
Wright, Andrew. 1989. *Pictures for Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.



Thirty Notes on Writing for this Journal

Clyde Coreil, Editor

It is our hope that articles in this *Journal* represent fresh and original ways of thinking about issues related to the imagination and language learning. Sometimes, these valuable new ideas surface in the work of very well known scholars and practitioners. Sometimes, they occur to persons who are virtually unknown and have never before written for formal publication. It is mainly out of concern with this latter group that I present below a working analysis of our editorial preferences. Many of the points have to do with the policies and values that have evolved in our particular publication, and will be of interest to anyone who wishes to write for us.

Point One: Say Something

Have something substantial to say or suggest about any topic that involves the relationship between the imagination and language learning. Develop at least one nugget of gold–a hypothesis or observation or even a specific hunch that you can support–and everyone will be happy. It should be very well noted that our interests are not limited to the classroom or to English, but extend to the acquisition of any language in any situation.

Point Two: Announce

Tell your readers what the nugget is; i.e., specify the central idea you will develop in the article. Don't simply talk about the narrow area of your interest: say exactly what you have found out or done and why it is important. State it clearly, state it succinctly, and state it early—within the first ten sentences. Set forth the nugget—the core of the central idea—in not more than fifty words. If your argument has several parts, name those parts within the first ten sentences. If, in announcing your hypothesis or observation, you find that you are rambling on—stop. Start again. Please do not attempt to lead your reader to the blinding insight that you will reveal only when you are very near the end of the article. Serious miscalculation.

Point Three: Organize

As you proceed in the written text, overtly point out the relationship between the central idea and each step in your presentation. Difficulty in doing this often indicates a need for reorganization. If you talk about the same thing in several different parts of the piece, then you should force yourself to think about reorganizing.

Point Four: Density

The *Journal* publishes articles in a wide range of areas, and tries to make them relatively accessible to interested readers who have a general background in language acquisition. It should be kept in mind, however, that what is straightforward terminology for one person can be dense and difficult for another. Accordingly, we ask that you take just a bit more time and briefly explain ideas and terms that are especially relevant to your argument. Another matter entirely: don't use dense jargon because you think it increases the professionalism of your writing—it doesn't.

Point Five: Examples

Examples enrich an article and are usually most welcome. They also constitute an effective measure to counter murkiness and density. If you aren't sure about what constitutes an example of a given principle, then you are not sure about what the principle is. You should not be on this shaky ground.

Point Six: Research

Be certain that you know the status of contemporary thought on your issue. Don't use multi-syllable words from a given field with the hope of establishing your right to dismiss current research as negligible.

Point Seven: Running Notes

We use running notes in which a reference is identified in the text by the author's last name and year of publication, both within parentheses. The alphabetically arranged "References" section should present more information on the publication. Numbered footnotes are used sparingly and are reserved for special, brief messages to the reader. Generally, this is the method endorsed by the Modern Language Association (MLA). Information on variations within that system are widely available in most books that offer basic instruction on academic writing. The systems we do not use are those of the American Psychological Association, *The Chicago Manual of Style*, and the Council of Biology Editors.

Point Eight: References

The term "bibliography" usually refers to any list of sources appearing with or without a text. "Works Cited," on the other hand, is usually limited to works that have been mentioned in a given text. "References," as we use the term in the *Journal*, refers to works that are mentioned in a particular article *or* that the author wishes to recommend in the reader's further exploration of the topic. The reference section is the last item and follows the appendix and any other material that appears after the text.

Point Nine: Old and New Ideas

Identify the part of the old idea that you are replacing or enlarging with the new. For example, you wish to say that the structure of stories is better for organizing certain classes than the principle of expanding from the known to the unknown. In that case, it is crucial to provide the reader with a definition and several clear examples of "the structure of stories" and of "expansion from the known."

Point Ten: Collaboration

New approaches in a discipline such as aesthetics or sociology are often fascinating when applied to language learning. In such cases, however, collaboration between persons knowledgeable in each field is usually essential. If you have difficulty in finding a collaborator, we will be glad to suggest a name or two.

Point Eleven: Reactions

If you are describing a new technique of doing something, then consider providing quotations from the persons involved. We prefer quotes that say something substantive in addition to simply endorsing your technique.

Point Twelve: Economy

Keep the paper lean. Concentrate on your topic and make a determined effort to avoid discussions and quotations that are not clearly and directly related to that topic. Do not mention other papers you have written unless they too are essential.

Point Thirteen: Titles

The title is probably the most important phrase in your paper. Ask yourself if the one you started with is still the best for your article. Generally, a title is not a question, and it contains no more than ten words. Quite acceptable to us are titles structured with a colon—i.e., a topic followed by a colon and a description or comment on that topic. A title containing puns or consisting of other clever plays on language should be replaced by one that makes explicit reference to your article. For example, the following title contains little information: "Sentences that Aren't Sentences: The Rabbit that Got Away." On the other hand, these titles are less pretentious and more effective: "Rock Poetry: The Literature our Students Listen To" and "Junk Mail Catalogs: A Treasure Trove for `Language Teachers" and "The Role of Art in Language Learning."

Point Fourteen: Subheads

We think that subheads are extremely important in making certain that the reader knows where you are going, and in breaking up the text so that he or she can follow you easily. A subhead should usually extract one of the main ideas from the section that follows it. Keep in mind that each paragraph does not need a subhead of its own.

Point Fifteen: Paragraph Length

Don't write in short paragraphs. A paragraph should normally be between 100 and 200 words long. Otherwise, it's too short or too long. Each sentence should develop one of the ideas that immediately precede it. If you feel that it is natural for you to use short paragraphs, then you should re-examine the whole presentation of your idea in terms of the thirty points presented here.

Point Sixteen: Style

It is the intelligence of your content that impresses the reader, not an ornate style of writing. Stay away from the long, convoluted sentences that often characterize prepared lectures. In spoken discourse, you can lift your eyebrows, roll your eyes, lick your lips, tap your nose, tilt your head, adopt an intonation of irony, pause or rush for effect, and so on. In writing, you have no eyes to roll and no eyebrows to lift—you have only paltry punctuation marks, italics and boldface that cannot approach the expressiveness of the human voice and gesture. So give the reader a break: control your verbal acrobatics. Attempt to limit your sentences to 30 or 35 words—fewer if possible. Use explicit transitions and carefully order ideas so that they form a logical and linear progression with plenty of examples.

Point Seventeen: Conclusion

Don't fail to present a conclusion. By the time you have completed the article, you are often far better able to summarize the potent ideas than when you began. You should, therefore, compare the conclusion to the introduction. If the conclusion states your ideas more concisely and concretely, move them to the introduction. Glorious finales are fine for theatres and fireworks, not journals.

Point Eighteen: Revision

If we return your article and ask for revisions, the changes we normally request pertain to more than one specific item. Unless we say differently, you should examine the whole article in terms of these thirty notes, concentrating on the specific information we mention. *It is a mistake to think that a request for revision is an agreement to use the article once several issues have been minimally addressed.* If we do need only certain corrections, we will be very pointed.

Point Nineteen: Editing

Articles are generally subject to various degrees of editing. This can mean, for instance, that sentences are cut so that the central idea is presented earlier. Or that various related parts of your piece are brought together and dealt with in one place. Perhaps you have secured supporting material that we asked for, and then we shuffle it around and make deletions. Please do not interpret any of this as negative comments on the quality of your writing. Every editorial change we suggest is based on our firm opinion that the style of the *Journal* is better served by the alterations. And rest assured that our suggested revisions will be sent for your approval.

Point Twenty: Integrity

One of the differences between popular magazines and journals is that journals usually expect more in terms of precision of reference, and in terms of integrity and responsibility on the part of the writer. If someone has treated the same idea you wish to develop, then you are obliged to state clearly that you are presenting a summary for this or that reason, or to specify what it is that you adding to his or her ideas. To fail to do this is unprofessional, unethical and possibly a violation of copyright law.

Point Twenty-one: The Appendix

Lists of addresses, long examples, or other material that you consider important but that would interrupt the manicured presentation of the central argument should be placed in the appendix.

Point Twenty-two: Copyright

Publishers are legally bound to secure permission to print any material that is copyrighted. Exceptions to this are made for re-printing parts of poems, lyrics, novels and the like for scholarly purposes. If your submission includes material such as a copyrighted cartoon or complete poem, we ask that you secure the appropriate permission. Send a letter to the copyright holder describing briefly your use of the material in an article to be submitted for publication in our *Journal*. Included with the letter should be a photocopy of the cover of the *Journal*, the title page, and the publication information on the inside front cover. A copy of the notice of permission should accompany the article when you send it to us.

Point Twenty-three: Studio-made, Professional Photos

If we do use your article, we will print a photo of each author followed by a maximum 50-word biographical sketch. Submission of this photo is not required until we inform you that we have shortlisted your piece. We prefer that this be a sharp, high contrast, black-and-white professional photograph made in a studio within the past five years by a professional photographer who understands the needs of printing. We most definitely do not like to receive color snapshots made by friends using disposable cameras with tiny flashes. We have prepared a one-page guide to photographs in which we mention the kind of action photos we like to use in the article itself. Obviously, we take this business seriously and feel that quality photographs contribute to the overall design of the *Journal*. If there is a substantial reason involved in your not going to a studio, please write us.

Point Twenty-four: Graphics in General

We definitely like to use tables, figures, charts, graphs, photographs, drawings, or any other graphics that add clarity to an article. When necessary, we will advise you or ask the assistance of our book designer. Do not submit photocopies of photographs, rough sketches, indistinct doodling, or crude lettering. Instead, make every effort to get your illustration crisp, sharp, well-designed and ready for the camera. If possible, submit your illustrations electronically on disk in 'eps' or 'tiff' format.

Point Twenty-five: Form of Submission

Unless you are writing in a part of the world with limited access to computers, we ask that you send along two of the very best hard copies you can make, and that you submit one Macintosh or PC disk with a contemporary word processing application. Abbreviate the title of the article and your name, and write the complete name of the software application on the disk itself—such as "Microsoft Works: 4.0." A hard copy that is not of high quality will not be usable should we need to scan it. If you do not have access to a computer, then you are most welcome to send us the text produced on a typewriter.

Point Twenty-six: Jury

If there is question as to the value of an article, it is sent out to one or more readers. Therefore, we ask that you send us *not one but two hard copies* of each article you submit. One copy will stay in our master file, and one copy can be sent to reviewers. If you submit different articles, put each set in a different envelope.

Point Twenty-seven: Pages

Make certain that your name, address, the main words in the title of your paper, and the page number appear on each page of the manuscript. Abbreviate and use initials where necessary. Double-space and leave margins of at least one inch. Use a typeface no smaller than 10 points ("elite" on typewriters).

Point Twenty-eight: Postcard Acknowledging Receipt

We ask that each separate envelope you send to us contain a self-addressed, stamped postcard with a list of the items you have enclosed. Such a postcard is the best way for us to inform you of what we have received. If you are writing from another country, don't worry about the stamp, but do send the otherwise completed postcard.

Point Twenty-nine: Early Submissions

We encourage you to begin correspondence with us and to submit your completed article as early as possible. That will give us time to suggest revisions and other changes before we present the letter-perfect manuscript to the book designer at the end of June. Authors of articles that seem to us in very good shape are informed that they have been "shortlisted." However, the final decision on whether or not to print the article in a given year is usually not made until May or early June.

Point Thirty: A Little Help from A Friend

Before you drop it in the mail, consider giving your finished text and these 30 notes to a trusted friend. He or she should be encouraged to ask questions about any and all things presented in the paper that are not clear or that are not in accordance with these guidelines. This is particularly relevant if you have limited experience in publishing formal articles.

The Journal of the Imagination in Language Learning

A annual publication dedicated to the role of the imagination
in the acquisition of first and subsequent languages at all levels

Dear Colleague:

It is very important that we know of your reactions to this Journal.

Please use the space below or separate pages for comments of any length. If you prefer that your remarks not be considered for publication, please so indicate.

Theoretical and practical articles related to the imagination and/or language learning are welcome. Although we prefer proposals, completed articles will be carefully read. The average length is 1,500 - 2,500 words, although some of our articles have been far shorter; and others, far longer. Our somewhat flexible deadline is April 15, 2000 for publication in the fall of that year. If you have an idea for an article, please write or call Dr. Clyde Coreil at 201-200-3087 or Dr. Mihri Napoliello at 201-200-3380. Our FAX number is 201-200-3238 or 201-200-2072. It's a good chance to be heard since some 5,000 copies of the Journal are printed and distributed annually in the USA and internationally.

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Send me a letter,
Send it by mail;
Send it in care of—
Birmingham jail...
Jimmy Rodgers

Call for Correspondents

The persons listed below have indicated that they are interested in corresponding or otherwise getting in touch with persons whose interests are similar to theirs. Interests are listed and coded in boldface according to the list above. If you would like to have your personal (not commercial) address, e-mail, etc. appear here in the 2001 issue of this publication, copy the form at the end of the list and mail it to us. Please note that these names are prominently listed on the internet site for this Journal *at the Center of the Imagination in Language Learning: www.njcu.edu/cill/cill.htm*

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The Journal Of The Imagination In Language Learning

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